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THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

B R A N N

THE ICONOCLAST

VOLUME II

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
FAITH AND FOLLY	1
A FINANCIAL FETICH	3
THE BEAUTEOUS REBECCA	12
THE BUCK NEGRO	15
A VISION OF HEAVEN	22
A NATIONAL POEM	28
PERFUNCTORY PRAYER	30
FACT AND FANCY	34
A SENATOR'S WOES	39
OUR "SISTER REPUBLIC"	41
THE PASSING OF HOGG	43
BISMARCK	50
A TOUCH OF HIGH LIFE	51
WACO'S "WARWICK"	59
LIGHTS AND SHADOWS	69
FACT AND FANCY	74
A BROTHERLY REBUKE	78
VISIONS AND DREAMS	83
AN EDITOR'S ERRE	85
THE AGE OF CONSENT	90
JONAH'S GOURD	94
A CARNIVAL OF CRIME	99
THE APOSTLE'S BIOGRAPHY	103
A MAID'S MISTAKE	105
EDITORIAL ETCHINGS	109
DEATH OF DOUGLASS	118
THE HEROES OF HISTORY	123
CASTOR AND POLLUX	125
HONESTY VS. LAW	130
SALMAGUNDI	132
BACHELORS VS. BENEDICTS	134
THE MONROE DOCTRINE	137
THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER	141

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INCOME TAX DECISION	147
SANCTIFICATION AND THE SWORD	149
NO CROSS-EYED CLERGYMEN	156
A BRACE OF BELLYACHERS	159
CURRENCY AND COMMON SENSE	162
DRUMMER'S NUMBER	168
WILDE AND HIS WORSHIPERS	170
A THREE-CORNED CONTROVERSY	174
FOOLS AND REFORM	176
FAVORITE FALSEHOOD	181
SLATTERY AND HIS DUPES	187
THE AMERICAN DRUMMER	188
THE CAT	201
PASSING OF PARNELL	206
THE "KREUTZER SONATA"	211
PRICE'S PREDICAMENT	215
THE JUNIUS LETTERS	218
HER BEAUTIFUL EYES	222
ISRAEL AS IT IS	224
THE REPUBLIC IN DANGER	233
A LITERARY RARA AVIS	239
EUGENE FIELD	242
CURRENCY AND COMMON SENSE	243
THE CUCKOO CONFERENCE	247
THE PROHIBITION PLAGUE	254
COURTESIES AND CORRUPTION	260
TEXAS AND TOLERANCE	264
A DAMNABLE DECISION	273
A BIBLICAL BEAR STORY	277
PUGILISM AND HYPOCRISY	281
ANTONIA TEIXEIRA	286
CASH VS. COIN	293
FACT AND FANCY	305
THE SAVIOURES OF TEXAS	310
A LITERARY LEPER	313
SALMAGUNDI	316

From the ICONOCLAST for February, 1895.

FAITH AND FOLLY.

“ LET US HAVE PEACE.”

IN sixty centuries of earnest toil, with infinite pain and tearful prayer, what knowledge have we gained of God, oh brother mine, that we should quarrel about His plans or attributes? As yet we can but touch the hem of Divinity's robe; we can but hear His voice in dreams or catch in fleeting visions glimpses of His glory.

Why quarrel about our faiths, and declare that this is right or that wrong, when all religions are, and must of necessity ever be, fundamentally one and the same—the worship of a Superior Power, the great

“ Father of them all, in ev'ry clime adored,
By saint, by savage and by sage, Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!”

Cult wars with cult, and sect with sect, while all unite to damn the independent worshipper; yet every man who bows the knee or breathes a prayer to any God of whatsoever name; every Egyptian bending at Isis' fanes and every Phenician sacrificing unto Baal; every Gueber worshiping his god of fire, and every Catholic following the sacred cross; every Peruvian adoring the rising sun and every Methodist agonizing at the mourner's bench, is a member of the same great church. They may accredit their God with different attributes and worship Him in diverse ways; but their faiths, when stripped of non-essentials, are one and the same—their Deities are identical.

Men of our day, who from the dizzy heights of modern

learning, hurl their logical thunderbolts at Mahomet's incoherent mouthing and Moses' solemn confabs with the Almighty anent matters of no possible moment; who sneer at Guatama's four-fold path to a Celestial Nowhere and denounce the worship of an illiterate carpenter as foolish blasphemy, forget that all things must have a beginning—that e'en proud Science sprang from the womb of stupid Ignorance, and stumbled, awkwardly enough, through long ages of Folly before she could firmly plant her feet upon the eternal rock of Fact.

I have no word of condemnation for any religious faith, however fatuous it may appear to me, that has cast one gleam of supernatural glory into the dark vale of human life; but I regard with unspeakable contempt the man of these modern days who decries all religious progress and brands as blasphemers those who would take one step beyond the crude faiths of former days—insists that religion is too sacred to be handled by human reason, that mother of which it was born! It were folly to expect a people whose wisest men believed this world the center of the universe and the stars mere ornaments of the night, to evolve a perfect religion, or form an intelligent conception of the great First Cause.

The Sacred Books of all the centuries are essentially the same—the half articulate voice of the world crying for light, the frantic efforts of man to learn whence he came and whither he goes, to lift the veil that shrouds the two eternities—to see and know! I gather them together—the Old Testament and the New, the Koran and the sacred Vedas, the northern Sagas and the southern Mythologies; I search them through, not to scoff, but to gather, with reverent soul, every gleam of light that since the birth of Time has been vouchsafed to man. I read the Revelations and ponder the Prophecies; I listen once again to the

voice in the burning bush and the mystic whisperings of the Dodona Oak; I descend into the Delphic cave, or stand with uncovered head to hear the voice of Memnon answer to the rosy fingers of the morn. I sit with Siddartha beneath the Bodhi tree and follow the prophet of Islam in all his pilgrimages; I stand with Moses on Sinai's flaming crest and listen to the prayer of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, then I go forth beneath the eternal stars—each silently pouring its stream of sidereal fire into the great realm of Darkness—and they seem like the eyes of pitying angels, watching man work out, little by little, through the long ages, the mystery of his life.

* * *

A FINANCIAL FETICH.

CLEVELAND AND THE CURRENCY.

THE gold reserve is at present making life a burden to the powers that be. No African tribe deprived of its stuffed snake, or maid forlorn despoiled of her virginity, ever filled the circumambient ether with clamor more dolorous than that with which the Cleveland administration is rending heaven's imperial concave because its blessed financial fetich is endangered. Its doleful jermiads mount heavenward night and day, while its piteous appeals to Congress to come to the rescue of its god of gold and thereby save the country from its impending doom, are sufficient to melt a heart of adamant. The round earth reels beneath its burden of agony and the tom-tom wildly beats to frighten from its sacrilegious feast the omnivorous demon that is devouring the great monetary moon which regulates the commercial tides—and sometimes afflicts with lunar madness those politicians

who repose beneath its horizontal rays. Perhaps ere these mournful lines are committed to cold type by the deft fingers of a fair compositor the dreadful danger will have passed and Cleveland's wild alarms and Carlisle's sad lament disturb our dreams no more. Perhaps even a Democratic Congress can be prevailed upon to come to the rescue of its imperiled country, and thereby relieve the agonized President of the awful alternative of letting it go to Hades, or appealing to his political foes for saving grace—throwing the Goddess of Liberty into the arms of Reed, who is supposed to have played Sextus Tarquinus to the old dame's Lucrece.

The Cleveland administration has already increased the nation's interest-bearing debt \$100,000,000 to galvanize the moribund Gold Reserve, and now admits that it might as well have poured a *Houston Post* editorial into a sieve, or stored its watermelon crop in the vicinity of a nigger camp-meeting. Perhaps in the fullness of time the idea will worm itself even into the President's nice fat head that when a brick block can be built on the point of a ten-penny nail, \$100,000,000 of gold will form a sufficient "basis" for a two-billion dollar currency—that the Gold Reserve "protects the credit of our circulating media" much as a rabbit's foot wards off headless hobgoblins, or compels the reluctant smiles of Fortune.

Think of \$100,000,000 of gold going "security" for more than \$1,600,000,000 of paper and silver; that were a "16 to 1" ratio worth considering! There is not \$600,000,000 of gold coin in the entire country; yet we are expected to believe a paper dollar isn't worth a whoop in Hades unless "backed by the yellow metal,"—that but for the "guarantee" of gold, silver would be discredited and lie down in the middle of the road. Think of a bank with but \$1,000 in ready cash, and whose entire assets

amount to less than \$6,000 enjoying the entire confidence of an intelligent community that has more than \$16,600 on deposit! Yet that is the position of Uncle Sam to-day if gold be, in very truth, "the basis of our currency." Turn Cheops upside down and you get a fair idea of the present monetary situation as seen by those financiers whom God in His inscrutable wisdom has suffered to take charge of our affairs.

Suppose the theory of Cleveland and Carlisle be correct—that the Gold Reserve is really the bulwark of our currency, and that should it be exhausted we would plunge to the dreaded "silver basis" like Lucifer hurled headlong out of heaven, and all our cartwheel and paper currency lose half its purchasing power: Who, then, is most interested in maintaining it unimpaired? Is it not the capitalistic, the creditor class—the very men who are assiduously assaulting it and who have twice "forced" the administration to issue bonds to replenish it? If the purchasing power of the dollar be reduced one-half, the debtor is not damaged, but the creditor is despoiled. The price of the farmer's products and the wage of labor quickly adjust themselves to the new conditions; but the man who has money loaned, or corded up awaiting investment, finds half of it turned to ashes and has absolutely no recourse. If the Reserve be of so much importance to the capitalist why is he constantly encroaching upon it—even looking up gold lest the government get hold of it, and with it ward off his impending ruin? If the financial Samsons insist on pulling the monetary temple down about their ears why should Messrs. Cleveland and Carlisle tearfully appeal to Congress to head 'em off? Why should we poor but honest Democrats who are struggling—and not always successfully—to discharge our debts, be expected to sit up o' nights and lament because our creditors insist on forgiving half our obligations?

Why bribe the capitalist with interest-bearing bonds to refrain from hoisting himself with his own petard? Let the damp-hool but kerosene his coat-tails and apply a match before ascending, and he will make a very respectable sky-rocket.

Does not every man with sufficient intelligence to avoid standing under a waterspout like an inept gosling till he drowns, know that if the Gold Reserve were really necessary to the credit of our currency, capitalists would no more make war upon it than they would scratch a match in a powder house or gayly bestride a buzz-saw making a million revolutions a minute? Cannot even the most irremediable monetary mutton-head understand that if the integrity of our circulating media depended on the preservation of the Gold Reserve, Carlisle could gather into the treasury half the yellow coin of the country in a single week without issuing a single interest-bearing bond—that it would be forced upon him whenever there was the slightest suspicion that “the basis of our currency” was in danger? Cannot Secretary Carlisle himself understand that if his theory be correct Wall Street would even now be eager to exchange gold for paper instead of vice versa—would lend to the government without interest all the gold it could scrape together?

The very fact that it is possible for a few men to exhaust the Gold Reserve in a single day proves conclusively that it is not and cannot possibly be the “basis” of our currency’s credit—that it is a ridiculous as well as an expensive nuisance. A security that may be destroyed any day, and which is at all times notoriously insufficient, is utterly useless so far as establishing confidence is concerned. If the government had possession of every gold coin in the country it could redeem but little more than one-half the outstanding paper currency. The people

know full well that should they become fearful of their paper money and demand gold for it they could not get it, to-day, to-morrow or next year—that to redeem it dollar for dollar is a physical impossibility. Isn't that a fine "basis of credit?" And yet nobody appears to be seriously alarmed except the Cleveland administration, a few "cuckoo" newspapers—and those capitalists who bought the \$100,000,000 worth of bonds!

The bulk of our currency consists of irredeemable paper—irredeemable because it exceeds all the gold and silver coin in the country! And yet it is accepted even more readily than gold itself—is "money current with the merchant" in every State of the American Union.

If all the gold and silver mined and minted since the days of King Solomon were sunk beneath the waters of the sea, our paper currency would continue to circulate and enjoy the same respect that it does to-day. Why? Because it serves the purpose for which it was created; because commerce does not care whether it will exchange for any other kind of money or not so long as it will expeditiously effect the exchange of pork and potatoes, soap and sad-irons; because it constitutes a claim on the entire wealth of this mighty Yankee nation—a lien upon every bale of cotton and bushel of corn, a claim upon every waving wheat-field and ounce of ore—a mortgage on every acre of sunny soil upon which falls the shadow of our flag.

What a man wants to know is that he can purchase with the dollar as much of the world's wealth as he gives therefor. Assured of that, he slips it into his jeans and goes on his way rejoicing. But, it will be asked, what imparts this virtue to a piece of paper? We have already shown that it is not the Gold Reserve that does it—that a bank whose liabilities are known to be double its total assets cannot possibly command public confidence. If the creditors of

a concern should demand their money it would be compelled to close its doors—and the very day that our paper currency is discredited by commerce that day redemption will cease.

Upon what is confidence in our currency grounded if not on gold? Upon confidence in the stability of the American Government, upon experience, credit, necessity! Upon ocular demonstration that it is an efficient exchange medium, an effective tool of trade.

The fear that our paper currency will depreciate in purchasing power if not redeemed in gold on demand can exist only in the minds of those who are ignorant both of the lessons of history and the maxims of the foremost financiers of the last two centuries. The currency of a country, no matter of what it is made, only depreciates in purchasing power when there is more money than business, more trade-tools than trade—when the supply of the exchange of media exceeds the demand. Expansion of the currency reduces, contraction increases the purchasing power of the dollar, whether it be made of paper or metal—just as the scarcity of labor raises the wage-rate and a surplus reduces it. Eliminate all our gold and silver coin, leaving to do the money-work of the country only the paper currency now extant, and instead of destroying its credit you enhance its value. The money-work must be done; if not by one agent, then by another.

But this line of reasoning—or rather these statements of fact—do not necessarily lead into the “Greenback” camp. It is one thing to point out that the credit of our paper trade-tool is not dependent upon the precious metals, and quite another to conclude from this premise that it were advisable to intrust the currency of the country to a paper-mill, a job-press and an *omnium gatherum* of political odds and ends who draw their financial inspiration

from the Forks-of-the-creek. The man who imagines that adding to our exchange media necessarily increases our wealth would double the grocer's stock by multiplying his gallon measures.

As the volume of currency dominates the standard of value, the most important of all our multifarious tools of trade, it should be controlled by commerce instead of by a partisan Congress. And such is, to a great extent, the case to-day. Not to exceed 6 per cent. of the exchange media employed by the commerce of this country bears the government stamp, and the amount is steadily decreasing. Commerce has practically taken the "Money Question" out of the hands of the politicians. While partisan polemics have perorated, and political conventions resolated; while able editors have poured forth columns of foolish advice and obfuscated Presidents looked into leather spectacles and sagely shook their heads; while the gold age and the silver age have struggled for their innings and the "wild-cat" and "red dog" have plaintively meowed or assiduously bayed the moon, commerce has quietly cut the Gordian knot—has provided itself, without the adventitious aid of the politico-economic "reformer," with that great desideratum of industry, a flexible exchange medium which automatically adjusts itself to the requirements of trade. The development of our banking business, of our system of credits—of what has been inaptly termed a "deposit currency"—renders it possible to transact nearly the entire business of the country without the use of actual money. Nearly 95 per cent. of all exchanges of goods are effected to-day without the shifting of a single dollar. Except in trifling transactions money is now used, not as a medium of exchange, but only as a measure of value. And it is worthy of remark that our monetary troubles are caused by the 5 or 6 per cent. of political money we still employ.

Mr. Cleveland imagines that he is confronted with a frightful condition, when he is only harassed by a foolish theory. He has not kept pace with the progress of monetary science—is pounding along in the dust far in the rear and imploring the procession to chase itself and catch up. We transformed the metal dollar into paper, and supposed it to represent so much coin—that did not exist. We just imagined it a dollar, and that, by some thaumaturgic feat or alchemistic process, the government might give us for it the gold it did not have and which we did not want, and found it served as well as though it weighed a pound—as though redemption were easy at any time instead of impossible at all times. Then we went further, and instead of a dollar “based on (non-extant) coin,” we imagined a dollar without even a green-coated paper ghost, and “based” not upon supposititious gold, but on commercial credit. And it, too, worked well—is, in fact, doing nearly all our monetary work to-day, and doing it better and cheaper than metal ever did.

And yet President Cleveland professes to believe that if he once permits that Gold Reserve to get away, a people possessing such a monetary imagination would be unable to exchange a keg of sauer-kraut for a calico shirt, a mugwump vote for a mixed-drink jag. He doesn't understand the capabilities of this country. Why, if worst came to worst, we could imagine that on Mars or the Moon there was located so much gold, and with that as “basis” for a paper currency, continue in business at the old stand—continue to exchange commodities. And we would have the sweet satisfaction of knowing that our Gold Reserve was safe—that we wouldn't have to bribe Wall Street with all the 5 per cent. bonds it could carry to let our sacred hoodoo alone.

We sincerely trust that Mr. Cleveland will cease to

worry about “the credit of our currency”—will not wear himself to a skeleton trying to protect the Gold Reserve. The currency will take care of itself if the politicians will but restrain themselves until a plan can be devised for placing it altogether under the control of commerce; and as for the Gold Reserve, he might as well let it go to join Symme’s Hole, or the long exploded fallacy that the government can make a currency of any kind that is “good the world over.” The commerce of this country gives coin the cold-shoulder, as being both costly and clumsy; and we have never yet been able to build a gold eagle that didn’t lose its tail-feathers and become simply a commodity like pork and potatoes the moment it crossed our frontiers—worth so much a pound in the country to which it was carried. There is no more reason why the government should provide commerce with minted gold for export than that it should put hot-house bouquets on the beeves we send abroad.

The ICONOCLAST would suggest that instead of increasing the excise taxes to enhance the public revenues during the present business depression, the Gold Reserve be applied to defraying the legitimate expenses of the government. If there is anything calculated to discredit our paper and silver dollars it is the action of the government itself in discriminating against them in the sale of its bonds—in persistently advertising that unless it can do what now appears doubtful, they must infallibly depreciate 50 per cent. Confidence is the basis of all currency; hence persistent calamity clacking—predictions by those high in authority that it would depreciate in purchasing power—were sufficient to make the people distrustful even of gold itself.

THE BEAUTEOUS REBECCA.

A BILLET D'AMOUR.

Miss Rebecca Merlindy Johnson,*

Care Post, Houston, Tex.

My Erstwhile Own:—Pardon me, Merlindy, dear, for addressing you through the columns of a great religious journal, instead of slipping my tender billy-doo under your back gate by the melancholy light of the gibbous moon. Conditions have arisen in this unkind and captious age which make it necessary that I should hang my torn heart upon my sleeve for daws to peck at, instead of following the lead of my soulful longings and inclosing my viscera in an antique envelop, perfumed with frangipani, and firing it at my Merlindy through the mails. You know—or I will grant you do—the poet says, “What great ones do the less will prattle of.” They are prattling of you and I, Merlindy. In the first flush of our fond affections we did forget that fixed upon us was the curious gaze of the *hoi polloi*, and ere we were aware Dame Rumor had donned her Sunday gown and sailed abroad to pour into the prurient public ear another tale of a trusting maid undone by selfish man—had even hinted that you were playing Madeline to my Willie. ’Twas all my fault. You were so pure and unsuspecting, so little versed in the ways of this wicked world, and I should have guarded you with the thoughtful solicitude of a careful shepherd shielding from a sneaping frost the fresh-dropped female

* The character “Miss Rebecca Merlindy Johnson” which appears from time to time in Brann’s writings, is a caricature of the contemporaneous proprietor of the *Houston Post*, whom it should hardly be necessary to tell the reader was feminine only in Brann’s satirical fancy.

lamb. I should not have permitted you to patter about the public streets in male attire and call yourself Rienzi Miltiades—I should have bade you beware those cute little breeches and that bob-tail coat.

Heaven forfend that I should be the unhappy cause of your spotless character being called in question. God wotteth well that your fair name and fame are dearer to me than the ruddy drops that visit my sad heart. (See Donnelly's Cryptogram.) But you are not bearing yourself toward me in a manner to allay suspicion. The public is quick to see the similitude of your treatment of the Apostle and Miss Pollard's haughty scorn of her former paramour, and is hinting that like causes produce like effects—is even putting its tongue in its larboard cheek and suggesting that "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." But don't you believe, Merlindy, that the Apostle scorns you. He knows your worth, and will stick to you, through good and evil report, like a dead game sport to loaded dice.

"My pen is pore, my ink is pail,
But love for you shall never fale."

Though you have ceased to love me, and decline to be even a sister to me, I cannot forget those dear old days that are dead, before "Pinkie" of the Hill tribes crept into pur ambrosial Eden like the odor of Buffalo Bayou into the boudoir of a Houston belle. You should be more cautious, Merlindy. You should remember that the public is watching you as intently as a nigger preacher eyes the plug hat circulated for the capture of small coin. Though your heart may break to-morrow you must be all smiles to-night. If you desire to spill your fond affections on a blond vacuum chained to an Aurora Borealis you should do it unostentatiously; and thereby dodge the

lists, I do insist that those who object to it are in duty bound to offer something better.

We have tried the restraining influence of religion and the elevating forces of education upon the negro without avail. We have employed moral suasion and legal penalties; have incarcerated the offenders for life at hard labor, and hanged them by the neck in accordance with statutory law. We have hunted the black rape-fiend to death with hounds, bored him with buckshot; fricasseed him over slow fires and flayed him alive; but the despoilment of white women by these brutal imps of darkness and the devil is still of daily occurrence. The baleful shadow of the black man hangs over every Southern home like the sword of Damocles, like the blight of death—an avatar of infamy, a decree of damnation.

There is not to-day in all this land of Christ an aged mother who is safe one single hour unless guarded by watchful sons, a wife who may rest secure beyond the reach of her husband's rifle, a female infant but may be sacrificed to feed some black monster's lust the moment it leaves its father's breast.

In the name of Israel's God, what shall we do?

This condition of affairs is becoming intolerable. A man's first duty is not to an alien or inferior race, but to his family. It is much better to shoot a negro before he commits an irreparable crime against the honor of a family than to hang him afterwards.

Drive out the "nigger"—young and old, male and female—or drive him into the earth! It may be urged that the "good negro" would suffer with the bad. It is impossible to distinguish the one from the other until it is too late. It were better that a thousand "good negroes"—if so many there be—should suffer death or banishment than that one good white woman should be debauched.

We must consider ourselves first, others afterwards. The rights of the white man are paramount, and if we do not maintain them at any cost we deserve only dishonor.

During the slavery régime the negro kept his place like any other beast of the field. He no more dreamed of co-habitation with white women than does the monkey of mating with the swan; but when his shackles were stricken off and he was accorded political equality with his old-time master he became presumptuous, insolent—actually imagined that the foolish attempt of fanatics to humanize him had been successful—that a law of nature had been repealed by act of Congress! If we could but restore the negro to his old ante-bellum condition of involuntary servitude and give him time to forget the social fallacies with which he has been inoculated by misguided theorists, all might be well with Sambo; but that is out of the question. We do not want to re-enslave him—he is not worth it. And if we desired to do so, the world, which is crazed with its own foolish cackle of “equality and fraternity,” would not permit it.

No, we could not revive the old customs if we would. There are too many long-haired men and short-haired women picking up a more or less honest livelihood by experimenting with Sambo at our expense, his wonderful “progress,” his divine “rights” and his devilish “wrongs,” to permit serious consideration of what is really best for him.

The negro is to the American social organism what a pound of putty would be in the stomach of a dyspeptic. The sooner we realize this fact and spew him out, the better. It were wise to make the eagle and the crow tenants of the same eyre as the white and black man of the same territory; as sensible to yoke Pegasus and a plow-horse as to make the Caucasian and African co-rulers of the same country. The attempts of sociologists to “harmon-

ize the races " are as absurd as trying to bring into the same diapason the twanging of a jew's-harp and the music of the spheres—the effort to make the negro an element of strength to the nation's energy is as misdirected as the labors of Gulliver's scientists at the Academy of Lagado. The American nation would be billions of dollars better off to-day had Ham failed to get into the ark. The negro has been the immediate cause of more bitterness and bloodshed than his entire race, from its genesis to the present, is worth, and he will continue the fruitful cause of trouble so long as he is permitted to remain.

The XIVth amendment to the Constitution is a flagrant violation of natural law—of the law that the greater and less cannot be equal, that matter must be subject unto mind, that wisdom was born to rule and ignorance to obey. To deny that the greater shall govern the lesser intellect is to abrogate man's right to rule the beast and God's authority over Adam's sons.

The greatest injury ever done the people of the South was self-inflicted—the introduction of negro slavery. The next greatest was the act of the Federal Government in making the black man coördinate sovereign of the State. It would have been a thousand times better for the Southern people had they adopted paganism or polygamy instead of negro slavery—a thousand times better for them and the nation at large had the Federal Government confiscated every foot of soil in the insurgent States, put the torch to every dwelling, destroyed every factory and filled every harbor with the wreck of railroads and the débris of business blocks instead of putting the ballot in the hands of the black. The ruin wrought by torch and torpedo could have been quickly repaired; the damage done by the XIVth amendment is well-nigh irreparable. Burning with the accursed lust for political power, the

Republican party, like another shameless Tarquin, held the knife at the throat of the Southern Lucrece while it robbed her of her honor, made her an object of contempt, her name a byword and a reproach. Pitifullest blunder of all the ages! Most damning infamy ever perpetrated since the dawn of Time! Fearfullest penalty brave men ever paid for daring death for conscience's sake!

This is a republic. The supreme power is, ostensibly at least, vested in the people. The voter is the sovereign. Suppose that it were an absolute monarchy: Would it not be a mistake unparalleled, a crime unspeakable to take from an ignorant, brutal slave his shackles and place upon his stupid head a crown? The Republican party did even worse. A sovereign cannot long oppress a brave and spirited people. Let him issue an edict that meets with general disapproval and it is laughed to scorn. Should he attempt to enforce it he is dragged from the throne. But the Republican party corrupted a sovereign from whose edict there is no appeal. It has debased the great army of voters, poisoned the political organism by injecting into it a vast mass of ignorance destitute of even the saving grace of virtue.

Had the negro been naturally the intellectual peer of the white man, it would have been a grievous blunder to give him the ballot, to force political responsibility upon him until at least a generation after his emancipation. He was an untutored savage in his native land, making no appreciable progress. He was captured, like any other wild beast, brought to America and sold into slavery. Here he was taught, not how to wisely rule, but to servilely obey. It required a thousand years of education to fit the thoughtful Saxon and the quick-witted Celt for the duties and responsibilities of American sovereignty; the stupid Ethiopian was fitted for them by the scratch of a pen and

a partisan vote! Transformed from semi-savagery to super-civilization by the power of a political fiat! From slave to sovereign by the magic wand of a genie! Fitted for American sovereignty! He was not fitted for it. Ten thousand years of civilization and education could no more qualify the negro for self-government than it could raise to the intellectual level of a lousy ape the piebald jackass who presides over the destinies of the Houston *Post*. True it is that there are some negroes with a suggestion of intellect; but they are usually negroes only in name—mongrels in whose veins flows the blood of some depraved Caucasian bum. The pure blood blacks who have exhibited intellectual and moral qualities superior to those of the monkey are few and far between. And yet the pure blood Ethiop is generally a much better and safer member of society than the “yaller nigger,” who appears to inherit the vices of both races and the virtues of neither.

The negro vote is dangerous because of its ignorance, doubly so because of its venality. It is utterly irresponsible, altogether reckless, knows little of principle, cares less, and will follow wherever the most blatant demagogue or the most liberal purse will lead. Is it any wonder that there is occasional “bulldozing” at the polls in the Black Belt—that men whose ancestors wrung Magna Charta from King John and recognition of American independence from King George, should decline to be dominated by the bastard spawn of white bummers and black bawds?

The presence of the negro in the South has kept this section a century in arrears of what it would otherwise be. It has prevented white immigration; it has kept out capital; it has bred a contempt among the Southern whites for labor; it has fomented strife between sections and is still fostering provincial prejudice, fanning the fires of sectional hate. The South could afford to give the negro,

black and "yaller," a hundred millions of money to leave the country and never return. The negro is, for a verity, the *Bête noire* of the South, a millstone about her neck, tending ever to drag her down into the depths of social and political degradation. Every Southern man, every man of whatever clime, long resident here, and not *sans* eyes, ears and understanding knows this to be true.

Does the Southern press proclaim it? Not at all. The Southern press, believing the black man a fixture—that the disease is incurable—with a burst of optimism that discounts that of the man who thanked God for the itch because of the luxury of scratching, proclaims his presence an inestimable boon, a transcendent blessing. Every day we are told that the negro is "the natural laborer of the cotton, cane and rice field"—whatever that novel economic theorem may mean. If it meant thereby that white labor is not adaptable to those industries, it needs no further refutation than a glance at existing conditions. In every Southern State and county white men are performing identically the same kind of labor as the black, and performing it better. There is not a spot within the broad confines of the United States where the African can live and labor that the Caucasian cannot live as well and labor with more effect.

Remove the negro from the South and this section will quickly become the most populous, prosperous and progressive portion of the American Union. But will the negro be removed? Not at all. The two great political parties need him in their manufacturing industry—the making of political "issues."

The negro will remain right where he is, wear the cast-off clothes of the white man, steal his fowls, black his boots, rape his daughters, while the syphilitic "yaller gal" corrupts his sons. Yes, the negro will stay, stay,

until he is faded out by fornication—until he is absorbed by the stronger race, as it has absorbed many a foul thing heretofore.

* * *

A VISION OF HEAVEN.

It was in the year of our Lord 1893, the seventh day of the ninth month, hour midnight. The editor had toiled all day trying to harmonize the two wings of the Texas Democracy—held out the olive branch of peace until his arm ached. He was now reclining on a pile of exchanges in the sanctum, listening to the dreamy rhythm of the music that floated in from an adjacent beer garden, the monotonous clickety-click of the Mergenthalers and the impromptu observations of the office cat to a visiting feline on the back gallery. The music of the beer garden orchestra gradually swelled into a mighty anthem, and the office cat's sad complaint became a paean of praise, the rat-tat-tat of the Mergenthalers, the click of the golden slippers, keeping time to celestial music on the ballroom floor of a house not built with hands, and the fitful gleam of an arc light, filtering through the dust and grime of an uncurtained window a Jacob's ladder, on the top rung of which a seraph poised with outstretched wings, like a blue jay on the top twig of a Washingtonian cherry tree.

"Ascend," he commanded, and the editor complied.

"What's the matter now?" he asked the seraph, as the latter gave him a lift and pulled in the ladder like a country belle taking the cube-root of a yard of gum. "Has another rebellion broken out in Heaven?"

"Naw," said the seraph with a shrug of his wings; "I thought perhaps you'd like to write up our town. Of course, if you do so it must be for its news features. We are not placing any advertising at present. Times are

too hard, and corner lots in the New Jerusalem are not what they were in the city's boom days. Immigration has fallen off to such an extent that St. Peter says the entrance fees don't pay for greasing the hinges of the gate, and he's thinking of padlocking it and applying for a new job. The committee on ways and means say we'll have to pave the streets with silver and set the throne with stage jewels if business doesn't improve pretty soon."

"What's the matter?"

"Too much hide-bound orthodoxy and too little Christianity. Now, were you to suggest that St. John had a bad case of the jimjams when he saw all those funny things, the people down below would probably mob you. The preachers would thunder against you from the pulpit and Deacon Twogood pronounce you a blasphemous atheist. Of course, every man's an atheist who doesn't see God through Deacon Twogood's telescope, and every man a blasphemer who applies historical criticism to the Bible—who attempts to separate the word of God from the folly of the *redacteurs*. Still, these good people continue to build palatial churches in which to practice hypocrisy, while men with families to support are glad of a chance to toil from sun to sun three times a week for a dollar a day! A man in that condition naturally becomes an anarchist, if not a criminal, and if his children do not turn out thieves and his wife a prostitute it is no fault of either society or the Church. I think the Almighty is getting tired of lending His name to such religious layouts, and I don't blame Him. If He ever asks my advice I'll tell Him to smash with His thunderbolts every church on earth that costs more than \$5,000 and start the fool-killer on the trail of every preacher who prattles about blasphemy while children are begging bread and women are dying of want. What the old world needs is a religion

of humanity—one broad enough and liberal enough to take up into its bosom every creature created in the image of God."

By this time the editor and the other seraph had reached a narrow gate, over which was inscribed in golden capitals: "Orthodox Heaven." The seraph pulled the bell and St. Peter peeped out through the wicket. Seeing that it was a newspaper man he threw wide the gate and removed his crown as a mark of respect.

"I'd best give you a return check," he said. "You're from Texas and you'll want to go back in an hour or two."

"Where is Judas Iscariot?" asked the traveler.

"Oh," said the man on the door, "Judas has been in Hell nearly 2,000 years. You see, he sold his Saviour for thirty pieces of—"

"Yes, yes; but he had the decency to go hang himself. Now there was another disciple who went back on his Master because he feared the rabble would ride him on a rail, then sat down and bawled like a spanked baby because he was a born coward and—"

But St. Peter was pointing out to a Populist the shortest road to Perdition and evidently did not hear. A man of majestic mien and carrying a golden harp came forward and grasped the wanderer's hand.

"Do they still read my pretty poetry down below?" he asked eagerly. "What do the modern critics say of it?"

"Permit me to introduce King David," said the seraph. "Davy, this is the editor of the Great Religious." The psalmist was delighted and wanted to present the pilgrim to Mrs. David, No. 923, but the editor checked him. He didn't care to make female acquaintances in a strange city.

"Let's see; aren't you the party who despoiled Uriah's wife, then had that gentleman murdered to conceal your crime?"

"Oh, please don't put that in the papers, pleaded Saul's successor. "Of course, on earth little things like that are charged up to a fellow, but they make no difference in the orthodox heaven. If a man is only pious and strictly orthodox, all things are forgiven him. Ah, here is my distinguished ancestor, Father Abraham. Allow me to present you."

"Come, nestle in this bosom with Lazarus," said the patriarch; but the pilgrim, being somewhat choice of his bedfellows, dodged the embrace.

"Are you the party who gave up his wife to the lustful Orientals, saying, 'She is my sister?' Are you the party who preferred the life of a cuckold to the death of a gentleman?" But he had already seized a harp and joined in the serpentine dance about the throne, crying with his cracked voice, "Holy, holy, holy."

Lot and his two daughters came tripping up to the sound of timbrel. The seraph beckoned the husband of the pillar of salt and he came to a standstill.

"You are the party whose righteousness saved him when Sodom and Gomorrah did the Herculaneum act?" He nodded. "Well, I'd just like to ask you, for the information of a medical fraternity, how a man who is dead drunk can accomplish what you did in the cave at—"

"Don't mention it," pleaded the beloved of the Lord, and he blew a blast on a golden trumpet, pulled his crown about his ears and joined in the sacred dance with his youngest daughter for partner.

"Who are those people bearing down upon us with crashing cymbals and loud hosannahs?" asked the scribe.

"That," replied the seraph, "is Murderers' Band." Those people were all hanged for infamous crimes; but when they found they were in for it—that they could not get a commutation of sentence to life imprisonment—re-

pented and were jerked to Jesus. That fellow who leads the procession and whose hallelujah is particularly unctuous, murdered his mistress, a sweet little girl whom he had debauched, and whom he compelled to enter a house of infamy to supply him with whisky money. The papers printed an account of the crime and his execution some time ago."

"Catch the celestial bird and give him to me," pleaded the scribe. "I long to hear him warble." He came with his ambrosial locks streaming wide on the celestial air, a song in his mouth, an instrument of melody in his hand.

"Hello, Jim! How did you break in here? Where's Julia?"

"Oh, Julia's in Hell," said Jim gayly, as he swept the strings of his instrument and cried, "Glory, glory, glory!"

"You see, she didn't have time to repent. She tried to shake me and I brained her with a hatchet. I got religion, and here I am, with two pair of reversible wings—came direct from the scaffold. But Julia's frizzling in everlasting fire. Strike the timbrel, blow t' e trumpet and let there be a joyful noise unto the——"

"Whoa! Shut off that sanctified Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-aye and tell me about Julia. She was a child pure as a lily, sweet as the incense that rises from Buddha's altar. You led her astray. You dragged her down to the lowest depths ever touched by womankind. You beat her. You brought Chinamen to visit her, took the price of her shame, bought whisky, and murdered her because she dared plead with you not to further humiliate her. You say that she is in Hell. Do you ever go to see her? Do you ever carry a cup of cold water to cool her parched lips? Does her agony haunt you? Does it cause the anthem to die on your lips and the hot tears to scald your cheeks? Do you pray God to allow you to change places with her?"

"What are you giving me? T'ink I'm a chump? We 'uns up here don't worry about der lost. That's their biz; see?" And he was gone—chanting Solomon's assignation song.

Just then John Calvin came along. "Where's Servetus?" asked the scribe. "Where should he be but in Hell?" retorted John. "He was a heretic and I burned him. Of course, he was an honest, truthful, kindly-hearted man, with more brains in his little finger than I had in my head; but he got wrong in his scriptural views, and, as in duty bound, I made a bonfire of him. Praise the Lord God Almighty, who is a merciful God!" And he drifted on to meet Henry VIII, who was gayly whistling, "Catharine, my Catharine."

"Have you any respectable people up here?" asked the scribe, pulling the seraph aside by one of his pin-feathers.

"Well," said he, glancing about apprehensively, "to give you a straight deal, I think the respectable people are all in Hell. And to tell you truly, I believe they are far happier down there than this jack-pot of pious murderers and sanctified hypocrites up here. Of course, the climatic conditions are not conducive to ecstasy, but the society is infinitely more select, and there's such a thing as human sympathy and love among the lost. Of course, I don't want you to give me away, but——"

"Nine columns short—wires all flat—two machines kerflummixed—news editor tearing his hair—foreman cussin' a blue streak—what'n Helen Blazes we goin' to do?" Say?"

It was the "Devil." The "Vision of Heaven" vanished, and the weary editor called out in agony, "This is Hell!"

A NATIONAL POEM.

THE Author's Publishing Company is the name of a New York concern that is preparing to play Mæcenas to merit and endow men of genius with what John J. Ingalls would call "wealth beyond the dreams of avarice." It is sending broadcast over the country what purports to be a nameless "national poem," and chained to this acephalous literary *morceau* is a proposition to pay \$100 in currency of the realm to the party suggesting the most appropriate title. This "poem" purports to be the work of one Ardenas Foster, who promises to supply the public with 130 pages of his poetic yearnings before the robins nest again. We do not know who Ardenas may be; but suspect he is none other than our old friend Orie Bower, the erstwhile "Poet of the Rockies," who has disguised himself with a clean shave, a paper dickey and a new pseudonym. He writes like Orie. His muse has the same happy-go-lucky gait—a confusing compromise between the long swinging trot of a hungry coyote and the "London lope," now so fashionable with the New York's Anglo-Maniacal Four Hundred. His lines have the same sensuous lilt, his song the identical dreamy cadence that caused the Greasers to swim the Rio Grande, the jackass rabbits to waltz on their hind legs and Major Fuel to climb Mount Franklin's rugged steeps and reflect on his latter end when Orie tuned his lyre and poured out his æsthetic soul in song as poet-laureate of El Paso's McGinty Club. Ardenas must be Orie in disguise—or Amélie Rives Chanler seeking an antidote for her early aphrodisiacs. We have room for but one verse; but it's a crackerjack, the gem of the collection and illustrates how Ardenas can soar when he spreads his pinions and takes a header into the

poetic empyrean. Those who desire to follow Ardenas in his flight can secure telescopes at this office without extra charge.

“Columbia! recurrent pregnant maid,
And bosom throbbing with ripe harvest-heat,
Till multitudes from thy fresh garners feed,
And on thy shores Creation’s races meet.”

We fear that the Author’s Publishing Company is not doing the proper thing. We submit that any one who can put an appropriate head on such a priceless literary torso deserves more than a hundred dollars. Ardenas is nothing if not original. A “recurring pregnant maid” is an idea with which even the immortal Bard of Avon was unacquainted. Dante never dreamed of such a thing. Milton knew naught of “recurring pregnant maids.” And we confess, with a feeling akin to shame, that we had not thought of the fair sex in that light ourselves—and we have associated with Rebecca Merlindy Johnson a good deal. Ardenas is the avatar of orginality. He is metaphor personified. He is poetic license with the bridle off. He explores new paths of poesy with the reckless abandon of a troubadour. He opens new vistas in literature with a simple, presto, change! But he hurries us along too fast. He doesn’t allow us time to become well acquainted with the oftentimes pregnant maid before asking us to contemplate creation’s races meeting on her “shores.” But we suppose it is all right. Certainly nothing can be impossible to a pregnant maid. She may have not only shores, but seas and a north and south pole, for aught we know. If Ardenas says so we’ll believe it. We should trust our men of genius and follow unquestioningly whithersoever they lead. We shall wait for the remainder

of Ardenas Foster's book with impatience. We are anxious to see what may be the peculiarities of the rest of his maids. But we trust he will not permit creation's races to feed on them or trample their "shores" with hob-nailed shoes. At least not while the maids are pregnant. We trust that in sending out autograph copies to the press Ardenas will not overlook the **ICONOCLAST**. If the book contains his portrait as a frontispiece we will be only the better pleased. There's a goat in this town we's got it in for.

* * *

PERFUNCTORY PRAYER.

THOSE LEGISLATIVE CHAPLAINSHIPS.

ONE of the most brazen swindles ever perpetrated upon a supposedly intellingent people is the practice of paying two able-bodied men \$5 a day each to pray a minute every morning for the benefit of the State Legislature. Five dollars a minute is at the rate of \$3,000 a day for ten hours of labor in the Lord's Vineyard. And yet we are told that salvation's free!

The **ICONOCLAST** believes in the efficacy of prayer; but if the Lord ever listened to a supplication fired at His throne for filthy lucre, without wanting to hurl an adult thunderbolt loaded for hypocrites, He is not the kind of party the Apostles declared Him to be. Every mortal should go down on his marrow-bones at least once a month and make personal application for a liberal consignment of saving grace; but vicarious prayer is about as sensible and in every way as satisfactory as kissing a pretty girl by proxy or employing a substitute to absorb your dinner. It is an outrage for the legislature to pay for purely perfunctory prayers out of money wrung from people who are

raising 4-cent cotton, and many of whom believe in bribing fools or knaves to commit blasphemy.

If this is indeed a land of "Religious Liberty," how comes it that the infidel is compelled to pay for prayers to a God whose very existence he doubts? Why should the Jew be tithed to provide lip-worship for one he crucified as a dangerous heretic and disturber of the public peace? Why should the Catholic be taxed to provide sinecures for Protestant preachers who denounce his church as the "Scarlet Woman," himself as an "idol worshiper," and the pope as viceregent of the Devil? We are told that the legislative prayers "are not for the law-makers alone, but for the people of the entire State." But the Jews and Catholics, the Episcopalianians and Campbellites are not asking a Presbyterian divine to intercede for them, having made other arrangements—secured their celestial transportation over rival routes. According to the declared principles of this government it should show no partiality in any cult or creed; hence if legislative chaplainships be indispensable, there should be one for every denomination. As the solons are usually impatient and play "hooky" on morning prayers if the dominies make a decent attempt to earn their salaries by laboring with the Lord more than a minute or two, it is quite clear that it would be useless to arrange the denominational invocations in alphabetical order; but that need be no drawback, for by having the entire religious regiment tackle the throne of grace at once they would carry it by assault. The good Lord would doubtless be willing to grant all they asked and throw in something as "pelon" to choke 'em off. I would I were in His place.

As such an arrangement would be a trifle expensive—and economy is the legislative shibboleth—we might compromise the matter by placing on the door of each house

a Kalmuch praying machine and requiring the members to give it a vigorous whirl as they passed in to be marked present. Or, as prayer by proxy appears to be now the fad, the doorkeeper might be required to manipulate the machine for the members, giving with each turn the name and denomination of the supplicant, after this manner: "Tally one, oh, Lord, on your Baptist string for Davis of Falls; one Methodist supplication for McLemore of Nueces; one Catholic mass for Crowley of Galveston; one prayer on general principles for Lewis of Bexar." Or we might connect the capitol building by kinetoscope and telephone with a church of every denomination and permit the law architects to indulge in their favorite brand of piety whenever the Populists succeeded in obtaining the floor and obstructing legislation with their great economic ideas. The ICONOCLAST charges nothing for these suggestions, but should the legislature insist on requiting it with a few registered warrants that are liable to be called in some time next summer, no objection will be urged.

If we must have oral prayers by professional sky-pilots who are "out for the stuff," let us go about it in a business-like manner. Let us get all the saving grace we can for our shekels. We could employ some good Methodist exhorter or Baptist elder who is "powerful in prayer"—whatever that may be—to tackle the job and work at it ten hours a day for \$100 a month. That would be a clear saving of \$200 a month, and we would not only get more prayer, but of a better quality. If there is any virtue in prayer we must seek it in the old-fashioned kind that wells up in the heart like a living spring and pours from the lips like buttermilk from a barrel-churn. Those prayers that are put together with the painstaking care of a young man's first "impromptu" oration seldom sail higher than the ceiling. When a man has to write a peti-

tion and commit it to memory before assaulting the throne of grace—when he is able to supply the press with a copy of his prayer the day before it is delivered—he is not called to labor in the Lord's Vineyard, and had much better be holding down a sulky plow or assiduously planting hogs. This Græco-Roman wrestling match with the Lord is never profitable. Give some good catch-as-catch-can “rassler” a room in the capitol, and when the legislature begins to grind let him begin to pray for the country. It will possibly need it.

The ICONOCLAST is not wedded to any of the above plans. If a better can be devised, adopt it; but if there is aught sacred in religion let us no longer make it a howling farce-comedy by employing men to profane the name of Christ with perfunctory prayer. The chaplainships are lobbied for months before the legislature meets, and when it does assemble a horde of pharisaical buzzards swoop down upon it looking for five-dollar bills. Imagine one of the Apostles seeking such a sinecure—or Jesus of Nazareth pocketing a treasury warrant for making the Lord's Prayer! Think of the Omnipotent God sending His only Son into the world to be crucified for cattle who are now renting their supposed “pull” with their risen Lord at a five-dollar-a-minute rate!

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The ICONOCLAST heartily commends those ladies who are appealing to the legislature to raise the “age of consent” from 13 to 18 years. That under the Texas law a lecherous old libertine who succeeds in obtaining the “consent” of an innocent child of 13 to her own ruin, cannot be properly hanged for rape—or castrated—is little to the credit of former legislatures. The age of consent should be 18 years; that it is under 16 is a damning disgrace to the State of Texas.

The cotton planters are now figuring on pushing the price of that staple up to a profitable figure by reducing the acreage. It will be love's labor lost. Push the price of cotton to 8 cents and you could no more hold the planters within prescribed limits than you could hypnotize a runaway freight train.

The woman who inveigles a poor fool, who is perhaps old enough to be her father, into calling her his tootsie-wootsie over his own signature, then sues him for breach of promise or the Seventh Commandment, exhibits her broken heart to judge and jury and demands that it be patched up with Uncle Sam's illuminated mental anguish plasters; who poses in the public prints as an injured innocent—sends a good reputation to join a bad character in hope of monetary reward—well, she, too, may be legally honest; but it's just as well to watch her, for no woman worth powder to blow her to perdition ever did or ever will carry such a case into court. When a woman's heart is really hurting her money is not going to help it,—when she's truly sorry for her sin, she tells her troubles to the Lord instead of to a policeman or reporter.

Too many preachers imagine that a criticism of themselves is an insult to the Almighty.

* * *

FACT AND FANCY.

DISHED UP IN BROKEN DOSES.

TRUTH and only Truth is eternal. It was not born and it cannot die. It may be obscured by the clouds of Falsehood, or buried in the débris of brutish Ignorance, but it

can never be destroyed. It's all that is, or was, or can ever be. It exists in every atom, lives in every flower and flames in every star. When the heavens and the earth shall pass away, and the universe return to cosmic dust, divine Truth will stand unscathed amid the crash of matter and the wreck of worlds. Falsehood is an amorphous monster, conceived in the brain of knaves and brought forth by the breath of fools. It's a moral pestilence, a miasmic vapor that passes like a blast from Hell over the face of the world, and is gone forever. It may leave death in its wake and disaster dire; it may place on the brow of Purity the brand of the courtesan and cover the hero with the stigma of the coward; it may degrade the patriot and exalt the demagogue, enslave an Horatio and crown a Humbug; it may wreck hopes and ruin homes, cause blood to flow and hearts to break; it may pollute the altar and disgrace the home, corrupt the courts and curse the land; but the lie cannot live forever, and when it's dead and damned there's none so poor as to do it reverence.

Print the grandest sermon that ever fell from Massillon's lips of gold, and not 20 per cent., even of the professedly pious, will read it; print a detailed account of an international prize fight and 99 per cent. of the very elect will make a dive for the paper before breakfast,—will swoop down upon it like a hungry hen-hawk reaching for an unripe gosling and fairly devour it, then roll their eyes to Heaven like a calf with the colic and wonder what this wicked old world is coming to.

We pore over books too much and reflect too little, depend too much on others, too little upon ourselves. We make of our heads cold-storage warehouses for other people's ideas, instead of standing up in our own independent, God-like individuality. Reading is the nurse

of culture, reflection the mother of genius. Our great religions were born in the desert: our grandest philosophies budded and burgeoned in the wilderness; the noblest poesy that ever swept the human harpsichord was born in the brain of a beggar, came bubbling from the heart of the blind; and when all the magi of the Medes and all the great philosophers of Greece had failed to furnish forth a jurisprudence just to all, semi-barbarous Rome laid down those laws by which, even from the grave of her glory, she still rules the majestic world.

Our educational system is Procrustean. It magnifies the mesquite but mangles the Cedars of Lebanon; runs a Burke and a blockhead, a Johnson and a jacksnipe through the same mill,—the intellectual pismire and the mental Colossus through the same curriculum.

I always feel sorry for a man who's got nothing to be proud of but a dead gran'daddy, for it appears to be the law of nature that there shall be but one great man to a tribe,—that the lightning of genius shall not twice strike the same family tree. Talent may be transmitted from father to son; but you can no more inherit genius than you can inherit a fall out of a balloon. It is a direct gift from that God who is no respecter of persons, and who sheds His glory on the cotter's child as freely as upon those of monarchs and millionaires.

We have in this country three aristocracies: The aristocracy of intellect, founded by the Almighty; the aristocracy of money, founded by Mammon, and the aristocracy of family, founded by fools. To the first belonged Abraham Lincoln, and his title was as good while swinging the ox-goad as while breaking the fetters of the blacks.

The colossal figure was there, though obscured by the shadows. The nation burst into flame, and the Titan was outlined against the lurid sky. Had the volcano slumbered on, Lincoln might have lived unknown and died unwept by the great world—one of the many village Hampdens, or mute, inglorious Miltos.

Love is the most sacred word ever framed by celestial lips. It embraces all that is holy in human life, every gleam of supernal glory that radiates from the immaculate throne of the Infinite. Of love was born every grace and beauty in Heaven and earth, every holy aspiration, every hope of immortality. It outranks every religion, is above and beyond all that human hand ever penned on papyrus or graved on stone, superior to the dust of dead prophets and the uncertain voice of departed priests; for it's the law of Life, the harmony of Heaven, the breath of which the universe was born,—the Divine Essence increase of the ever-living God.

The place to take the true measure of a man is not the forum or the field, not the market-place or the amen-corner, but at his own fireside. There he lays aside his mask and you may judge whether he's imp or angel, king or cur, hero or humbug. I care not what the world says of him,—whether it crown him with bays or pelt him with bad eggs; I care never a copper what his reputation or religion may be: If his babes dread his home-coming and his better-half swallows her heart every time she has to ask him for a five-dollar bill, he's a fraud of the first water, even though he prays night and morn till he's black in the face, and howls hallelujah till he shakes the eternal hills. But if his children rush to the front gate to greet him, and love's own sunshine illumines the face of his wife when

she hears his footfall, you may take it for granted that he's true gold, for his home's a heaven, and the humbug never gets that near the great white throne of God. He may be a rank Atheist and a redflag Anarchist, a Mormon and a Mugwump; he may buy votes in blocks of five and bet on the election; he may deal 'em from the bottom of the deck and drink beer till he can't tell a silver dollar from a circular saw, and still be an infinitely better man than the cowardly little hypocrite who is all suavity in society, yet makes his home a hell,—who vents upon the hapless heads of wife and children the ill-nature he would like to inflict upon his fellow men, but dares not. I can forgive much in that fellow mortal who would rather make men swear than women weep; who would rather have the hate of the whole he-world than the contempt of his wife,—who would rather call anger to the eyes of a king than fear to the face of a child.

The ICONOCLAST makes war upon no religion of whatsoever name or origin that has fostered virtue or added aught to the happiness of the human race. It is simply an independent American journal, exercising its constitutional prerogative to say what seemeth unto it best, without asking any man's permission.

“Reform” is the motto of the present State administration and economy its shibboleth; yet the clerks who could not command \$50 a month in commercial life are allowed \$5 a day for doing practically nothing, just as they were under former régimes.

The Tyler *Telegram* humbly apologizes for having called that wide-lipped blatherskite, T. DeWitt Talmage, “a religious fakir.” Next thing we know our Tyler con-

temporary will apologize for having inadvertently hazarded the statement that water is wet. When a daily newspaper tells the truth, even by accident, it should stick to it instead of crawling on its belly in the dust to humbly ask pardon of the Devil. The ICONOCLAST will pay any man \$10 who will demonstrate that T. DeWitt Talmage ever originated an idea, good, bad or indifferent. He is simply a monstrous bag of fetid wind. The man who can find intellectual food in Talmage's sermons could acquire a case of delirium tremens by drinking the froth out of a pop bottle.

The Kosse *Cyclone* points with evident pride to the fact that "95 per cent. of Texas homes are entirely free of debt." The *Cyclone* forgets that a majority of them are shielded by the Texas homestead law, especially designed for the protection of scoundrels who are able to discharge their debts, but decline to do so.

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A SENATOR'S WOES.

WE gather from the Washington dispatches that Senator Call, of Florida—he of the perspiring feet and tan-colored hose—is again in a violent state of eruption—is swamping the newspaper world in boiling mud and molten lava. Call is a curiosity which a generous Providence gave to the newspaper gang to have fun with—set him as a green and odoriferous oasis in the dreary desert of modern journalism. When worn and wearied with business cares the man of affairs turns to billiards or bucks the tiger; when the preacher contracts a case of ennui from his own sermons he inauguates a political reform by seeing what Parkhurst saw and feeling what Parkhurst felt; when the

society young man finds that the mental strain of adjusting his chrysanthemum *à la Anglaise* is breaking him down he spreads his imported accent over less territory and lets his mustache droop; but the newspaper gang turns to Call for rest and recreation. They are all glad he is in the Senate, for in the fierce light that beats upon that mighty forum he is grateful to the eye as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, or a yellow-label at 5 o'clock in the morning. Last summer, when the noonday sun beat straight down upon the capitol and caused shirt collars to wilt like blue violets in the hot breath of a blast-furnace, Senator Call did, in the presence of the assembled beauty and chivalry, remove his shoes and pile his tootsie-wootsies on the desk of a brother Senator where all might see and admire their shape. It is even alleged that he supplied them with cooling draughts of fresh air by means of a palm-leaf fan, and gently wiggled his toes, as people are wont to do when at peace with themselves and all the world. The press gang scented the sensation. How could they help it? They made slighting remarks anent the size and shape of the Senator's understanding, and even insinuated that the color of his socks was not *au fait*. Senator Call's play was to smile a seraphic smile, such as illumines the front elevation of the father of a family when caught surreptitiously extracting hyblæan honey from the dewy lips of the hired help—and put on his shoes; but instead of pursuing this pacific policy and suffering his bad-breeding to be forgotten in the hurly-burly of reforming the tariff and playing the sugar market both ends against the middle, he arose in the full assembly of the gods, denied the allegation and defied the allegators. Ajax defying the lightning was not a circumstance to the Senator's grandstand play. Besides, Ajax was no such stayer as the gentleman from the land of everglades and

amphibians. He made just one defi, then rang himself off, while Call stays by his job. Whenever he can get the floor he proceeds to rehearse his troubles, and the more he rehearses the madder he gets and the more certain he is that he will yet make the great American press humbly sue for permission to get off the earth. Call has got a most excellent nerve, but he should have his judgment taken out and filed. During the past century divers and sundry politicians and preachers have undertaken to hold the American press up by the tail and allow the sawdust to ooze out; but thus far the effort has not been crowned with much success. If the lessons of history teach any one thing it is that the man who attempts to fight the printing press with his mouth is a bigger fool than the Comanche Indian who lassoed the locomotive.—*Brann in Waco News.*

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OUR "SISTER REPUBLIC."

A NORTHERN Senator suggests that "Uncle Sam will some day gather Mexico into the Union." Then Uncle Sam will be a bigger fool than the red-muzzled ignoramus who writes the political leaders for the *Houston Post*. A great majority of the Mexican people are simply Indians, and that of the most worthless breed; too lazy to work and too cowardly to steal—utterly useless for any legitimate purpose beneath high Heaven. Mexico is called "the land of God and Liberty," but its people have about the same conception of the Almighty that a yaller dog has of astronomy, and know less of liberty than does a hand-raised dodo. Their country is called a "Republic," but it is in fact the nearest approach to an absolute monarchy that ever existed in the New World. One-half the Mexican people neither know nor care when a national

election is held,—bow their necks to the miserable little goose-yoke of a half-breed dictator as meekly as though slaves *de jure* as well as *de facto*. Uncle Sam doesn't want 'em. He has all the "Indian problem" he can take care of at present. He does not care to add to his stock of "American Sovereigns" some millions of people who are perfectly content with a handful of frijoles per diem, a jackal made of mesquite poles, a crop of sand fleas and lice, and the privilege of sitting in the sun and scratching themselves while they nurse a cornshuck cigarette. There are some good people in Mexico, but they are sadly in the minority. There are a few old Spanish families there that have declined to pollute their blood by mixing it with that of the Aborigines, compared with whom our own Digger Indian is a gentleman and our chrysanthemum dude an intellectual Colossus. There are a few Germans, and a handful of English and Americans who have gone there to make a stake in mining or railroading, and then get out of the land of darkness and petty deviltry just as quickly as the good Lord will let them. No; Uncle Sam will never annex Mexico—not if he knows his business. If he wants more territory, he will swipe Canada or Cuba, or twist his lasso about the English Isle and pull it into Boston harbor; but he will not saddle himself with the red blanket brigade of our blessed "Sister Republic." Your Uncle Samuel has done some very ridiculous things, but he is not an irremediable ass. He already has enough mixed breeds and hopeless mongrels. He has niggers and Indians, mongols and political mugwumps, anarchists and ignorami, beggars and bawds galore; and he knows when he has enough of a bad thing. Instead of annexing Mexico, he is far more likely to put the people of that country on a par with China's pigtails and prevent their immigration. This he would certainly do and do it quickly,

but for fear of losing the little trade he has built up with that country. The average Mexican immigrant is more ignorant than the Chinaman, and infinitely more worthless. If Texas could trade what Mexicans she has for a plugged quarter and lose it she would be millions of dollars ahead of the deal.

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THE PASSING OF HOGG.

A POLITICAL PHENOMENON.

THE Hogg régime has passed into history, and may now be dealt with without suspicion of partisan bias. It is unfortunately true that when a man is seeking or holding public office the estimates of him which find their way into print are usually worse than worthless as indices of his true character. Generally speaking, the American press is neither ignorant nor corrupt, but it is so permeated by partisan rancor that it can seldom see more than one side of the shield. The position in the world of politics of the average newspaper is that of an attorney seeking to "make out a case," rather than of a judge impartially considering the evidence. The public man occupies the position of prisoner at the bar, who is in turn damned and deified by the counsel in the case. Governor Hogg was no exception to the rule. While in the judgment of a large contingent of Texas editors he could do no wrong, in the opinion of others he could not possibly do right. Had he fired the capitol or destroyed every railway there would not have been wanting papers to defend the act as eminently wise and patriotic; while had he doubled wages and raised the price of cotton to a dollar a pound, others would have denounced him as a crazy communist who was doing the State incalculable damage. With the press about

equally divided between foolish adulation and unreasoning abuse, Governor Hogg passed into private life. He must be judged by his public acts, considered in connection with his environments, instead of by the noisy clamor of partisan disputants. And we opine that in the last analysis when the "wind and water" have been squeezed out by the impartial critic—there will be found, if not a nugget of pure gold, at least auriferous ore. We are now considering Governor Hogg; with Citizen Hogg we have here nothing to do. The former belongs to history; the privacy of the latter should be respected.

Governor Hogg was a shrewd politician rather than a far-seeing statesman, a man of strong individuality rather than superior intellect, a daring iconoclast rather than a successful builder. Such men are as necessary to our political life as the thunderstorm to our physical well-being. Some damage they unquestionably do; but without them the world would settle down into well-worn ruts and make little progress—our entire social organism suffer the hopeless paralysis of a cowardly conservatism. It is the Mahomets and the Luthers, the Colombos and the Dultons, the Cromwells and the Henrys—the enthusiasts—who have led the way out of the Valley of Darkness to the Delectable Mountains of Light.

The apostle of *laissez faire*, the boasted conservative—who is the bond-slave of custom and bows the knee to precedent—never accomplished anything of value in this world; never. He is simply a machine for the consumption of victuals, a rack upon which to hang old clothes. It is the so-called "cranks" who make the world go round. It is the innovators who carry the banner of science ever further into the Unknown and make a man more a god and less a beast. It is the iconoclasts who break down political prescription and religious *præmunire* and thereby make

improvement possible—enable those who come after to erect upon the ruins of the False an eternal temple of the True. Such men make grievous blunders; all men of action do. They are seldom wise, for of wisdom is born that caution which is akin to cowardice. Had Hogg been Hamlet he would have avenged his father's murder and ruled in Denmark; had Hamlet been Hogg he would have been grubbing roots to-day in eastern Texas.

Governor Hogg rode into power on a borrowed mule,—the property of Judge A. W. Terrell. The latter was wise enough to see that monopolies were inimical to the best interests of the people, and that corporate power, unless held in check, would soon become paramount. He was farseeing enough to understand that alien ownership of land would, unless rooted out, inevitably result in a system of serfdom such as cursed Ireland with the blight of industrial decay, mental degradation and moral death. He sounded the alarm, but his sonorous sentences made little impression on the people. Terrell was a theorist rather than a man of action—a student rather than a leader. He could appeal to the reason of men, but reason alone never yet wrought a revolution. The dynamics of all great political upheavals are passion and prejudice. While Terrell moralized Hogg acted. He took up the economic ideas of the Sage of Onion Creek and exploited them with all his tremendous energy. He preached the anti-monopoly crusade with such vigor that the people soon came to regard him as its originator. He played Vespucci to Terrell's Columbus, Peter the Hermit to his Pope Urban. He became the recognized chief of the movement which Terrell had conceived, while the latter was scarce accorded the rank of second lieutenant in what should have been his own command. This was Terrell's misfortune rather than Hogg's fault. The former lacked

those qualifications for leadership which the latter possessed in a superlative degree. Hogg was a great political general, a born fighter. He possessed that wondrous power of personal magnetism which laughs at logic while grappling the hearts of men with hooks of iron. The common people flocked to his standard, and even men of wide experience in the world of politics became his fanatical devotees. Old party leaders, who were themselves popular idols and might reasonably expect to be preferred, gave him their adhesion as readily as the veriest tyro, and were content but to bear his armor. Hogg became a political god, and his very blunders were accepted as evidence of supernal wisdom. Faith supplanted Reason, and the most flamboyant nonsense became the utterance of an infallible oracle.

Naturally, the money power, against whose prescriptive rights Hogg's crusade was directed, fought him with every weapon unlimited wealth could command. The great dailies, those creative autocrats that are supposed to mold the destinies of men and nations as the pickaninny shapes mud pies, were aligned upon him, and for five long years "volleyed and thundered" as did the batteries at Balaklava. The press of other States bombarded him at long range, while every corporation heeler and political peon joined in the hue and cry. A weak man would have cowered before that storm of calumny. A man of delicate fiber, of fine sensibilities, would have been goaded to madness by the pitiless fire-whips of invective or driven to suicide by the poisoned rapier of ridicule. Before a simoon less grawsome Parnell, that prince of reformers, sank into an untimely grave. But Hogg was not made to be killed with paper bullets. What had meant destruction to others was to him an element of strength; what greater men had found too grievous to be borne was to Hogg an

inspired song, encouraging him to greater efforts. He threw down the gauntlet full and fair to the allied powers of the daily press and corporate wealth. He set his battle in array, then "got barefoot" and appealed to "the boys at the forks of the creek;" and he never appealed in vain. They would have died for "Jim." The very niggers caught the infection and voted for him despite the edict of their political bosses and the seductions of the \$2 bill.

When Hogg was elected Governor it was expected that, having reached "the goal of his ambition," he would be more conservative, but those who had adjudged him simply a political trickster were mistaken in their estimate of the man. He was a Cromwell, not a Cagliostro; a Mahomet instead of a Mokanna. He sought power, not for self-aggrandizement, but that he might benefit the people. Reform was his motive, power only the means. He was even more radical in the Mansion than on the hustings. The club he had fought so desperately to win was wielded with the vigor of a Hercules assaulting the Hydra. An alien law was enacted that made even his adherents gasp. Men who knew nothing of the science of transportation were made autocrats of the Texas railways. Other legislation equally radical and far-reaching was put through under executive pressure. Hogg was elected for "reform" purposes, and he was determined to "bring corollary rather than want a spirit." When he became a candidate for re-election the conservatives declared that he was no longer a Democrat and declined to support him. In Texas to question a man's democracy had long been equivalent to impeaching his reason or commercial integrity. "Democracy undefiled" was the State religion, and, like charity, covered a multitude of sins. If a man were but a "good Democrat" all things were forgiven him, while a doubt as to his political orthodoxy were sufficient to damn

him. Not only did the opposition demonstrate that Hogg's political principles were not in accord with those enunciated by the ecumenical council of Chicago, but that he had embraced some of the salient features of Populism,—which were equivalent to branding him as an abolitionist in 1859 or a heretic in 1860. The conservatives were backed by the money power and supported by every morning daily in the State of respectability and influence. It was a combination and armament that might have appalled a Napoleon; but Hogg went out and "talked to the boys," and the tremendous opposition was borne back like Bengalese before a bayonet charge in the north.

The commission wrangle was settled and the railway companies meekly bowed their necks to the goose-yoke—submitted themselves to a junta of politicians who could scarce tell an air-brake from a bill of lading. Corporation officers and the daily press began to speak of Hogg in kindlier terms,—to cajole one they had learned from bitter experience they could not drive. But it was of no use. Hogg was not a man to sue for quarter or to give it. Instead of modifying his policy and meeting the conservatives on half-way ground, he grew even more radical. Instead of temporizing he piled Pelion upon Ossa. His states-rights doctrines became more pronounced, his utterances more flamboyant, his bearing toward corporate interests more aggressive. And this to the last day of his administration.

Hogg was probably driven to greater extremes than he contemplated by the opposition which he encountered. He found great abuses, and to correct them it was necessary to apply heroic remedies. Had the Southern States laid down their arms at President Lincoln's command, the negro might not to-day be our political peer. Had there been no abuse of power by the French court there would have

been no Reign of Terror. Had corporate power not attempted to oppress the people the fierce crusade led by Hogg would have been impossible. When the pendulum swings too far in one direction it is sure to swing too far in the other. Excesses are well-nigh unavoidable in war, and the administration of Hogg was a battle from inception to finale.

Governor Hogg's administration will, we may reasonably hope, prove as beneficial to Texas as the Revolution did to France. Tyranny sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind, oppressed with the tax and was answered with the torch. The priesthood grew presumptuous only to be discredited,—forbade freedom of thought in the name of the Deity, only to see a courtesan worshiped in Notre Dame. The Reign of Terror, by itself considered, was Hell's own carnival; but the student of history can now understand that only by fire and sword could be cleared away the mighty obstructions to human progress.

What the aristocrat was to France the money power was rapidly becoming to Texas; what the priesthood was to that unhappy country the Democratic party was to the Lone Star State. The revolution of which Hogg was the leader not only dethroned the money power and made the will of the people forever paramount, but it struck the political fetters from the minds of men and made progress in political science possible. Excesses may have been committed and injustice done; but time will heal the wounds and experience inculcate wisdom.

“The evil men do lives after them;
The good is oft interréed with their bones.”

BISMARCK

BISMARCK predicts that he will die before the close of the year, and the probabilities are that his prophecy will prove true. He has braved the storms of more than three-quarters of a century like some grand old oak, but at last the proud spirit is broken, utterly crushed, irremediably undone. Disappointed ambition, royal ingratitude, the curses of his enemies, the plots of rival politicians and the danger of assassination could not shake his imperial courage nor bend his will of brass; but God laid His hand on the woman Bismarck loved, and, as if stricken by the lightning's writhen bolt, he fell prostrate, never to arise again. The "man of blood and iron" has a heart beneath that breast of adamant, and at last the hand of fate hath found it. With the woman he loved at his side he could bear all, endure all and mock at destiny; without her he is but a child, crying out that his burden is greater than he can bear. Bismarck is the architect of United Germany. For twenty years he was practically the autocrat of Europe. He will go down in history as the greatest man of his generation. His name will live in song and story when those of contemporary kings and emperors have been hidden by the shadows of the centuries; but all this is nothing to Bismarck. His old wife is dead. The pride of his youth, the companion of his prime and the solace of his age has been taken from him, and the torch of Fame casts its lurid flame only upon dust and ashes.

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above,
For love is Heaven, and Heaven is love."

The ICONOCLAST desires to return its sincere thanks to the American Press, and especially that of Texas, for the many kind words accorded it on the occasion of its new birth, and to express the hope that, by the grace of God and indomitable industry, it will in some measure approach that high standard of moral worth and literary merit so generally predicted for it.

The ICONOCLAST is not revived with the expectation that it will reform the world—will drag the golden age in by the ears or pull the millennium before it is ripe. If it does but succeed in exposing a few Frauds and peeling the cuticle from an occasional Fake—if it can but recover a few square acres of Mother Earth from the domain of Falsehood and Folly, from the dominion of Darkness and the Devil, it will not have lived and labored in vain.

Mr. Cleveland's administration will go down in history as the most successful failure since the days of that other obstinate egotist, Andy Johnson.

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A TOUCH OF HIGH LIFE.

THE PRESS AND THE PARVENUS.

THERE was a time when the principal business of the American press was the publication of important news and the expression of opinion anent matters of moment. In those days it posed as a “public educator,” and the self-bestowed title was not altogether inappropriate; but it has, for the most part, dropped its high pretensions and is now notoriously “out for the stuff.” The “great dailies” that once went in for glory and aspired to decency, that “molded public opinion” and “saved the

country " semi-occasionally, are not averse to accepting a fat fee for championing some particular interest, regardless of the general welfare. When it was proven that the Galveston-Dallas *News* had sold its alleged editorial influence, it had the audacity to defend the practice as legitimate journalism! A majority of the other morning papers of Texas are not of sufficient importance to justify the public in keeping tab on them. If they should succeed in selling their souls for a copper cent the public would only pity the purchaser. When the great dailies are not "pulling the leg" of some corporation with a legislative ax to grind, or inflating with a pneumogastric bellows some political boomlet born of a bank account, they are courting the parvenus—who are ever ready to pay for publicity—puffing society belles for a consideration, obsequiously bowing to cymling-headed dudes with more dollars than sense and gathering in the golden shekels from every available source.

The marriage of Miss Anna Gould—a very commonplace young person—to a French butterfly whom we have no evidence ever did aught to entitle him to existence upon the earth, afforded the "independent" American press an opportunity to slop over in great shape, and it slopped. Tons of toads were eaten with evident relish, fulsome flattery fairly overran the column rules, and the disgusting tide of eulogistic dish water is now but slowly ebbing.

Some of the bridegroom's ancestors had once borne petty titles—out of which the *tiers etat* unceremoniously kicked the sawdust; but the nice little thing, who is of less importance to the world at large than a blind wiggle-tail, still clings to his title like a spendthrift to a canceled pawn ticket—calls himself the "Count de Castellane"—and spends his time painting, primping and putting

about like a girl innoculated with the matrimonial itch. And the great American dailies, which are supposed to be the very avatars of rugged republicanism, "dearly love a lord" even though his title be worth no more than a draft on a broken bank or a cook book to a starving hobo. Miss Gould was the rather stupid daughter of an American sovereign who began life as a map-maker and mousetrap architect, and who succeeded, by very questionable methods, in amassing an enormous fortune. "Nobility and wealth!" That were indeed a combination sufficient to cause the average American editor to bow his face to the earth and lick boots until he resembled a tame duck with its mouth full of dried mud! The great dailies informed us when the little "Count" went to bed and when he got up. They told us what he ate for breakfast and how he spent each day, but even "journalistic enterprise" could not catch him in the water closet. The press watched the little parvenu who had purchased him as narrowly as a hungry buzzard could a spoiled beefsteak. "It was a love match, pure and simple," they informed the world—then wondered in the next paragraph if she would utilize the trousseau purchased less than a year ago, when she was engaged to wed some other gilly. But she didn't. She could afford a new one—the mousetrap of her sire had been set for suckers as well as for ravenous rodentia. The trousseau purchased when she made that other "love match, pure and simple," was not nearly good enough in which to be tied fast to a titled dude—like a living man to a dead mule. The cable was kept hot ordering new "dreams of loveliness" from the he-milliners and mustachioed mantua-makers of "Paree," and the great dailies had to tell us all about it—just how each gown was cut and what it cost, how many suits of silk lingerie the bride-elect had ordered and their colors. Whether the "Count"

ordered any extra underwear for the occasion the newspapers neglected to state, which omission leads us to suspect that he was not addicted to the luxury of lingerie and the expense of pajamas before he succeeded in trading his Confederate bond title and mortgaged château for fifteen millions of Jay Gould's ill-got gold. The Associated Press —the champion toad-eater of the universe—informed us, however, that before ze "Count" could obtain a special dispensation from his theological boss to bag the eager heiress she had to sign an agreement not to interfere with the religious faith of Frenchy and consent that their kids be brought up Roman Catholics. If His Holiness had but seen his niblets he would probably have considered the latter stipulation entirely unnecessary—a work of supererogation, so to speak. In about two years we may expect to see the "Countess" come sneaking back to her own countree in company with a divorce case and a tale o' woe that would wring the briny from a bust of Sitting Bull. It is the usual way. She will have the experience, the "Count" will have the cash and the newspapers will have another scandal with whiskers on it that trail the shrinking earth.

In the hurly-burly of getting Miss Gould married, the newspapers rather neglected the divorce case of Mr. and Mrs. Willie K. Vanderbilt—only giving us a column or so each day as condiment. But they had been hammering at it for lo! these many moons—had already told us, several times, all they knew about it and pretty much everything that a morbid imagination could guess at. Willie and his wife separated some time ago for reasons which they succeeded in keeping within the sacred Vanderbiltian circle. It was known that Willie resembled Solomon in that he "loved many strange women," and that was usually

supposed to constitute the *casus belli*; but Mrs. Willie did not trot to any alarming extent in the same class with Cæsar's wife. That they quarreled and fought like some drunken "canary," and his drab was understood; but, by a liberal use of money they kept the divorce proceedings out of the papers, so it is not generally known whether the separation was caused by "incompatibility of temper" or mutual fornication. The pot probably grew aweary of calling the kettle black, and the latter of animadverting on the complexion of its companion, so a legal separation was secured and each can now indulge in those propensities peculiar to social swelldom untrammeled by marital ties. Mrs. Vanderbilt is one of three sisters, each of whom found a husband an inconvenient handicap. Willie and his ex-wife, buoyed up by boodle, will continue to float in the *crème de la crème*—where adultery seems to be the rule and decency the exception—and the great dailies to deluge a defenseless public with highfalutin' hogwash anent their most inconsequential doings, just as though the common people cared a tinker's dam whether Mrs. Vanderbilt was yum-yumming with Alphabet Belmont in London while Willie was dallying with the Neustetter *nymph du pave* in Paris. Cornelius Vanderbilt, a cross-grained old curmudgeon with his bump of acquisitiveness abnormally developed, went into business and prospered. Had he failed the great dailies would trouble themselves but little about his descendants. Those who got hanged or divorced might get a few lines gratis, the marriage and death notices would cost the usual dollar per line—set in solid nonpariel and sandwiched between market reports and pure patent medicine advertisements.

John W. Mackay is said to have begun life by peddling bock beer over a pine bar. The occupation probably

required intellectual effort to which he found himself unequal, for he exchanged the barkeeper's apron for the miner's overalls; the bung-starter for the quartz-breaker. He was a good fellow and the Goddess of Fortune favored him. When he "struck it rich" his wife, who appears to have been general manager of a miner's hash-factory, forthwith blossomed out as a "sawsiety" butterfly. A dinner of "biled" turnips and bull beef, a calico Mother Hubbard and a red bandanna had formerly been the *ultima thule* of her ambition; but with millions at her command, nothing America could produce satisfied her sybaritic tastes. She obtained an establishment in "Paree," and there she is in the habit of dispensing Lucullean luxuries to the hungry horde of high-toned hoodlums who regard a fresh-picked American parvenue as an oasis in the Sahara of semi-starvation. And the daily press, which would not have given her a two-line personal when she was slinging hash and building slumgullion, began to gush like a cask of fermenting molasses, to crawl on its belly before the Mackay millions. Mrs. Mackay could not purchase a poodle or old John cut his corns without the fact being cabled across the ocean and peddled to eager papers by the Associated Press—accompanied by the usual cackle about its own remarkable "enterprise." Finally Miss Mackay persuaded papa to purchase a little macaroni prince for her to play with, and the press proceeded to have ecstatic spasms. The "Prince and Princess Colonna" loomed up by the page in all important newspapers, accompanied by double-column before-and-after-taking portraits. More space was devoted to this foolish young female and her titled lazzarone than to all the authors and artists, inventors and educators upon the earth. One would have supposed that when, in consideration of some millions of money, the Prince Colonna

consented to occupy the same bedroom with the American heiress, a new and happier era had dawned upon the human race—that the millennium was at hand. But when the Prince had wrapped his scorbatic diaphragm around a few square feeds—at his wife's expense—he became so vicious that a self-respecting dog could not have endured him, and his purchaser was compelled to turn him loose. A few months of poverty usually brings him around all right, however, and a "happy reunion" results. Colonna would rather live with his plebeian wife occasionally than clean cuspidors or manipulate a hurdy-gurdy for a living. Every time the Prince patches up a truce—for the purpose of acquiring more boodle to blow in on the gamblers and courtesans of European capitals—the American people are compelled to learn all about it, else boycott the daily papers. Just how much the Dago dudelet has cost old honest John will probably never be known; but the latter has doubtless regretted a dozen times that the law does not allow him to take the scurvy scion of a titled but ignoble family out behind the woodshed and knock out his seldom brains by slugging him beneath the coat-tails with a brogan built for that especial business.

As these lines are penned the readers of the daily press are getting another dose of the disreputable Mrs. J. Coleman Drayton, *née* Astor. Old John Jacob Astor embarked in the skin business and, being an artist in that particular line, soon accumulated enough money to purchase property in Manhattan Island when it was worth about as much as a West-Texas goat walk. New York grew into a great city and the "unearned increment" made the family he had incidentally founded—while trading tin tomahawks and firewater for the Aborigines' furs—as rich as a fat pork pie. Three generations have sufficed to rub

the grease off his gold and transform the aggressive effluvia of his hide house into odors of Araby the Blest. J. Coleman Drayton distinguished himself by capturing one of the Astor heiresses, then started in to enjoy life regardless of expense, while the great dailies gushed and slopped, toadied and taffied. The girl was no great shakes, but her bank account was a beaut. J. Coleman was nothing to speak of, but with an Astorian fortune at his fingers' ends he quickly became an object of absorbing interest to our "public educators." But, like Othello, the gentleman who parts his name on the side and his hair in the middle became suspicious. The green-eyed monster straddled his neck, rode him around the donjon keep of the Astorian castle and permitted the portcullis to fall upon him with a dull, sodden plunk. Not caring to "keep a cistern of foul toads to knot and gender in," he gave his alleged better half the bounce. It was expected that he'd borrow an ax and carve a great three-cornered orifice in the anatomy of her paramour; but he concluded to tell his troubles to the court. An opera-bouffe duel grew out of the affair; but the cuckold was nursing his mental anguish and kept well out of the way while a brace of society swells wounded the atmosphere and attracted the world's attention to the frailties of his wife. Meanwhile the press fairly staggered beneath the burden of the sensation—a crisis seemed to have suddenly arisen in the history of the human race! We were almost led to expect that the world would cease revolving and the entire solar system slip an eccentric because a female descendant of an ignorant old fur trader had been dallying with the dudes—had strayed from home in her reckless pursuit of happiness.

And so it goes. The daily press is ever at the feet of the parvenus, always cringing before the Golden Calf.

Its boasted "backbone" is made of gutta-percha, it is as deficient in moral force as a mangy yellow fice. It has degenerated from a public educator into a professional scandal-monger, from an inculcator of independent American manhood to a pitiful flunkey that serves for hire, panders to a vitiated public taste for stray pennies, flatters Mammon for its fodder and slobbers over everything with a title simply because it has no better sense. That is strong language; but it will find an echo in the heart of this mighty Yankee nation—composed, not of princes and pimps, lords and lackeys, counts and cuckolds, but of American sovereigns who do not depend upon boodle to make them respectable; who are superior, morally, mentally and physically, to the very kings of foreign countries. The proudest European nobleman is a Subject; the humblest American citizen is a Sovereign! The American who cannot understand that fact—whether "able editor" of a great daily or heiress seeking social distinction—should be castrated or killed. We are breeding entirely too many title-worshipers, toadies and intellectual tom-tits—too few self-reliant, manly men, who realize that below them are all things, animate and inanimate, above them only the eternal King of kings.

* * *

WACO'S "WARWICK."

THE ECONOMIC SIR ORACLE.

PERHAPS the most remarkable exhibition of unadulterated audacity that even this age of political impudence has produced, was George Clark's letter to Editor McKie, of the Corsicana *Light* anent the currency question. McKie

is something of a "Little Giant," himself; therefore, not much inclined to hide in the tall grass and shiver when Brobdingnagians whose coat-tails hang near the earth caper gayly upon the scene. He even had the temerity to poke fun at our politico-economic Polypheus by suggesting, in a good-natured note, that the *Light* would be pleased to hear from him anent Grover Cleveland's transcendent greatness as viewed in the garish light of current events, and to receive by mail a few living pictures of that phenomenal prosperity which was to trail blithely in the wake of the gold-basis band-wagon.

Judge Clark was loaded. He always is—if not with one thing, then with another. It was only necessary for Mr. McKie to touch the trigger to produce an explosion that made the mad earth reel and the coyote howl in his lair. The free silverites, said our Sir Oracle, are a lot of "lunatics," "idiots" and "quacks," who are playing into the hands of the boodle-grabbers without having gumption enough to know it, ruining the country and the Democratic party and raising the dickens generally. Then he gave Grover Cleveland a few unctuous gobs of taffy, laid on with a trowel, shrieked for "honest money" in quavering tones of anguish, and darkly hinted that if "the experiment of free government goes down in the darkness of despair" the free silver "quacks" will have the blood of the Goddess of Liberty on their sin-sick souls. Fearing that somebody might inadvertently overlook this latest child of his fecund genius, he sent the epistle to the Dallas *News* as well as to his correspondent. Whether he mailed a copy to Cleveland—"not necessarily for publication, but as an evidence of good faith"—we cannot say; but it is painfully evident that he considers himself the caloric condiment; or, as the vulgar would say, "the hot mustard,"—feels quite sure that no other

free silver Marmion will presume to beard the lion in his den, the Douglass in his hall.

Judge Clark is unquestionably harboring the hallucination that he is a thorough master of monetary science—that what he does not know about “finance” might just as well be banished from the textbooks. That modest faith doubtless affords our little friend considerable satisfaction, and it seems like wanton cruelty to interfere therewith; but, sooner or later, some carping Cassius is certain to straddle across the stage and inquire in sub-cellars tones and with a sneer that would frappé absinthe:

“In the name of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed
That he hath grown so great?”

He may even presume to ask what George Clark knows about monetary science—and who told him. Nay, smarting beneath a philippic built in a club-foundry rather than a rapier-factory, he may even take the name of our little tin god in vain by inquiring what it ever did or said that stamps it as a Montesquieu or Jevon, entitled to speak *ex cathedra* on economic questions.

In these days of multifarious and conflicting interests when old fallacies are exploding and new truths shaping themselves but slowly in the minds of men; when ancient landmarks are becoming useless as hackles and handlooms and all established guideposts point backwards rather than forwards; when the theories of our fathers no longer fit industrial conditions, and in the monetary chaos new systems of finance are slowly forming, how best to secure and maintain an equitable “measure of value,” becomes a most difficult and perplexing problem. Even those who have made monetary science the study of a lifetime—

and who are economists eager for truth, rather than politicians with an aggravating itch for office—but hold their opinions tentatively, freely admit that their most careful calculations may miscarry; yet George Clark has played Alexander the Great to this new Gordian knot—made the murky problem as translucent as mud.

What a head that man must have! Or,—perish the thought!—is it another case of fools rushing in where angels fear to tread?

By his own confession, Clark knew less than nothing of monetary science two or three years ago, for he was then a rantankerous free silverite, a bell-wether in that coterie of pseudo-economists he now denounces as a lot of “quacks” and “idiots,”—who are hilariously kicking the center of gravity out of the financial cosmos, while “the experiment of self-government” ties a grindstone about its neck, and with a shriek like a lost soul, plunges down into “the darkness of despair.”

Like Saul of Tarsus, Clark suddenly saw a great light—was transformed from gibbering “idiot” to all-wise economist as by the magic wand of a genie. The devil of “destructive demagogery” with which he admits all free silverites are possessed—was exorcised in a moment, and the spirit of constructive statesmanship spread over his purified soul her radiant nimbus—like a new army blanket enveloping a good Agency Indian. But he is not so lenient as was St. Paul to those not favored with a celestial vision. Instead of becoming an Apostle to the Gentiles and striving by moral suasion to bring them within the fold of the true political faith, he denounces as both fools and knaves those who formerly held his garments while he stoned the prophets. Instead of freely forgiving those who, in their blindness, nailed their political Messiah to the cross, he hangs his mantle of Christian charity on the

hat-rack and sails into 'em like a bantam rooster taking a fall out of a marauding hen-hawk. But then St. Paul may have been the exception which proves the rule that there is no rancor so relentless as that of the apostate.

The ICONOCLAST has never advocated the free and unlimited coinage of silver,—or any other metal; hence its withers are unwrung by Judge Clark's latest ebullition. Not a hair of its head was harmed by his volcanic eruption; but it does dislike to see a man who has been on every side of the currency question—and has apparently mourned because there were no more sides to get on—dealing red-hot damnation round on those who decline to accept him as their economic oracle and flutter every time he flops. It has criticized the free silverites in years gone by, and is liable to do so again; but when a political harlequin and economic nincompoop aspires to wield the Pelian spear—when he begins to prattle about "42-cent dollars" not only destroying our industries, but threatening the very existence of free government—it feels like grabbing a stocking filled with hot mush and taking a hand in the mêlée.

When a man presumes to tell the American people that they have no right to set up their views in opposition to the *ipse dixit* of any president, however wise; or insist upon a policy that pleases them, however foolish it may be, The ICONOCLAST can be depended upon to file a protest. That's what it's here for. The people made Grover Cleveland President of this government, and, according to those principles enunciated by its founders, he is their servant instead of their master. The man who assumes that the creature can become greater than its creator—that the people should bow to the will of the President instead of vice versa, is no friend to free government. He should be knight of the bedchamber to some petty European

prince, or master of the buckhounds to some half-wit king. His head is not properly shaped to appreciate the sovereignty of a free people.

As between Mr. McKie's silver dollar, worth 42 cents in gold, and Judge Clark's gold dollar, worth 238 cents in silver, we prefer the former, if you please. No country was ever irremediably ruined by "cheap money," but the people of many a nation have been hopelessly pauperized by dear money. Mexico has the former, and the Greasers are "chewing": we have the latter, and white men are going hungry to bed. Mexico, but a few years ago the land of chronic pauperism, vagabondage and half-breed banditti, cursed with bad government and robbed by avaricious priests, is forging steadily to the front; while America, boasting herself "heir of all the ages and foremost in the files of time," is decreasing in taxable wealth—is retrograding, morally, financially and politically. Study the two pictures—and let their significance soak into you!

It is a fact so notorious that we had supposed even such economic amateurs and financial dilettanti as Judge Clark to be familiar therewith, that the purchasing power of gold and all currency bottomed thereon, is steadily increasing. Even the Chicago *Tribune*, the very avatar of "Gold-buggism," admits an advance of 25 per cent. during the past three years. What does that mean? Simply that the man who three years ago borrowed at 10 per cent. \$1,000 with which to build a little home, stock a farm or grocery store, must return a sum equal to more than \$1,625 of the money he borrowed!—is compelled to pay an interest rate of 18 1-3 per cent. And that is the condition of affairs which George Clark—who once asked the people of a debtor state to elect him Governor—would perpetuate. He tells the debtor that if he objects to return-

ing a fat pig for a mangy pup, he is a demagogue politically and a d—d rascal commercially, and when he protests against a policy that would still further enhance his burden, that he is “playing the idiot.”

The ICONOCLAST is always polite—the recognized Chesterfield of American journalism; but trusts that it may be pardoned for addressing to Judge Clark the identical language he fired at the free silverites: “You are perpetuating a condition under which money sharks are robbing the people, and, to do you the utmost credit, haven’t sense enough to see it.”

While your jejune prattle anent “honest money” may cause the unskillful to laugh, it will make the judicious grieve. You don’t know what an “honest dollar” is. You once thought it a cheap silver dollar; now you protest that it is a dear gold dollar—and it is neither. An honest dollar is an immutable measure of value, just as a quart cup is an immutable measure of molasses. It is something we have never yet had in this world—and never will have so long as we take as currency basis any commodity the production of which depends chiefly upon chance. The value of gold and silver, like that of pork and potatoes, depends upon the supply relative to the demand. Prohibit the milling of corn and you enhance the price of wool. Permit both to be freely used and they will, to some extent, regulate the price of each other; hence the free coinage of gold and silver, while it cannot assure us an absolutely “honest dollar” will give us a much more reliable measure of value than can either metal to the exclusion of the other.

A dollar that enables the creditor to rob the debtor is as dishonest as that which assists the debtor to despoil the creditor. The ICONOCLAST desires to see every man accorded his just dues to the last farthing; but if either

Antonio or Shylock must lose, in God's name let it be the latter. If the millionaires of the East, so long the protégés of government, must surrender somewhat of their "unearned increment," or the toilers of the West and South be deprived of their little all and reduced to hopeless peonage, let the former gnaw a file.

Were Judge Clark familiar with the monetary history of the world he would know that as the purchasing power of a nation's circulating media increases wealth concentrates, while the masses become pauperized, ignorant,—eventually unfitted for self-government; and that as its purchasing power diminishes prosperity becomes more general and the people grow in knowledge and patriotism.

Judge Clark's politico-economic history is a variegated picture which he ought to get framed—then turn it to the wall. He rode into public notice, not to say popularity, on the coat-tails of Sul Ross, and has never been able to get over it. The ICONOCLAST has no grievance against him. In fact, it rather likes the little man—and "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Judge Clark is a clever gentleman and a good citizen; still, when he rushes into the journalistic arena and denounces two-thirds of the Texas people as a job lot of ignorami and idiots, it is but fair that the tapeline be laid upon his own exuberant knowledge and iridescent intellectuality. When a man not only clamors for free silver with the vigor of a pick-aninny pleading for 'possum but out-Herods Herod and demands a currency of \$100 per capita, then turns tail with the suddenness of a bridle pup that has gone gayly forth to find a fifteen-pound Thomas feline—and found it—it cannot be amiss to inquire the thusness of the whyness. When Judge Clark was training with the free silver "quacks" he vigorously denounced Cleveland as the agent of Wall street; now he is trailing in the wake of the

President's band-wagon with the pathetic trust of a Durham calf following its dam, and denouncing his old compeers in "idiocy" as the pliant tools of that supposed sink of financial iniquity—and the people are wondering what "Warwick" wants now. True, there are no vacancies on the supreme bench to be coaxed up by the plaintive cry of the "cuckoo;" but it is barely possible that a brace of bad falls, received while striving to salt the narrative of some high-soaring political condor, has repressed his noble rage,—that Cæsar's motto (as well as monetary views) has been amended.

We are not a little surprised to see Judge Clark declaring, over his own signature, that the free silverites are destroying, not only the country but the Democratic party—that they "belong to the Populists and ought to have sufficient courage to go there." Some of us talked very much that way in 1892, when we were trying to elect him governor; but we learned from our leader's own lips at the Dallas love-feast that it was all a mistake, a dangerous heresy; that Governor Hogg—the chief of Texas' free silver offenders—was "a better Democrat" than our political liege! Then we proceeded to put on our sack-cloth and sit in the ash-hopper,—to renounce our wicked heresies and crawl meekly, penitently back into the great Democratic sanctuary and convulsively lay hold of the horns of the altar. At least, some of us did. Others could not purge their minds of the idiosyncrasy that they had been "contending for a principle," which had inadvertently got lost in the harmony shuffle, and proceeded to anchor a theoretical red brick in the toe of a blue yarn sock and register a vow that, if the "Little Giant" ever again poked his head above the turbid waves of the political sea, they would hit it so hard it would pop like an empty paper bag in the hands of a small boy. They

knew they were conquered and ought to capitulate; but were hardly prepared to see their political Napoleon lay both his boasted principles and his snickersnee at the feet of a snollygoster. While most of the "bolters" took their harmony medicine "with long teeth," Clark licked it, liked it,—and tried to swallow the bottle!

Judge Clark first turned the gold-bugs out of the Democratic party, then fired the free silverites, leaving only the editor of the *ICONOCLAST* within the sacred pale. Then he passed an amnesty act and received both the white and yellow money metallists back into full membership. Now he has once more excommunicated the silver men, and the gold-bugs are becoming uneasy—anticipate that it will be their turn next.

Now that Judge Clark has succeeded, after years of patient endeavor, in escaping from the free silver "lunatic" asylum, we shall raise no objection if he chooses to kick down the front door and release the rest of the "idiots;" but we trust they will not again scale the pickets and leave them in the lurch. Should they persist in imitating all his economic curves, we beg to suggest that they might save considerable labor by building their pantaloons with bottoms both behind and before. Thus equipped, they could go forwards or backwards as occasion might require, and without the physical strain of many facings about.

But we should not judge the "Little Giant" too harshly. For every effect there must be an efficient cause,—and he may be the victim of circumstances entirely beyond his control. He has contracted such an inordinate itch for office that he is compelled to scratch himself against both poles of the political world, it were wiser and more humane to humbly pray for his complete recovery than to impale him on the finger of scorn.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

FROM HELL TO HEAVEN.

IT was no Y.M.C.A. party that gathered in the rooms of "Old Zoilus," as we called the dramatic critic, to partake of his hospitality. There were several faber shovers and half a dozen dangerously pretty girls from to Gaiety Theater across the way. What the bond of union between the stage and press may be I hardly know; but certain it is that the members of the two professions meet and mingle with a bonhomie, not to say bohemianism, characteristic of no others. Many actors are journalists as well, and every journalist is supposed to be familiar with the technique of the stage.

"Just a little lunch, you know," Zoilus said as he slated us, taking care to get the dark-eyed Neapolitan danseuse near himself.

"Old Zol was always partial to pretty dagoes," whispered the sporting editor to the young soubrette, who was striving desperately to "mash" the critic who could make or mar her fame and fortune with a whirl of his faber.

"D—n the dagoes!" muttered the soubrette through her white teeth, as she vainly strove to hear what the Neapolitan was saying in her soft broken English to the autocrat of the stage.

The "luncheon"—a costly spread—was flanked by the finest vintage of France, and cigars such as can only be made in Cuba. The feast ended, the ladies lit their cigarettes, and as the wine went round, song and story, toasts and repartee brilliant with nether fire, followed fast and furious, and the revel grew wild as the night

without, replete with rolling thunder, raging wind and rattling hail. A piano that had seen better days, but now hung to the boarding-house fringe of respectability, yielded its discordant notes to a coryphee's clumsy touch, and round and round the banquet-board the party danced in delirious bacchanal; but Zoilus lounged before the fire and puffed dreamily at a cigar, a smile on his face,—the bitter smile of a man who mocks himself. Faster and faster the bacchic revelers flew, until, with a bound like a panther, the danseuse leaped upon the table, and, sweeping bottles and glasses aside with a whirl of her dainty foot, executed a fantastic oriental dance, kicking a pendant from the chandelier far above her head for finale. The howl of delight that greeted this performance caused a policeman to climb the stairs and pound on the door with his heavy baton; but none heeded him. Zoilus lounged across the room, pulled off the Neapolitan's satin slipper, filled it with wine and drank a toast to Italy, "the home of Art and Beauty."

"Dis am the lastest bottle, Mistah Zoilus," said the borrowed waiter as a cork struck the ceiling and, descending, lodged in the low corsage of the danseuse. Half a dozen men begged it at once. She took it from between her breasts, globes of snow, tinged with the sunset's gold, kissed it and held it high above her head. It was the soubrette's opportunity. Quick as a flash of light, her foot shot into the air and the coveted cork bounded into the sea-coal fire. There was a tigerish gleam in the Neapolitan's eyes, an aggressive movement on the part of the Yankee girl, but Zoilus lounged between them as if by chance, and, circling either with an arm, began a rollicking drinking song in which they joined.

"The last bottle, eh? Erebus, you black imp of Hell, let the nectar flow. Friends, sweethearts, may God bless

you all, and shield you from the scourge of Poverty, the shame of Sin and the shadow of Sorrow. Good-night."

The hint was heeded and the tide of hilarious humanity rolled down the narrow staircase, the danseuse and the soubrette arm in arm. I turned to go, but Zoilus laid his hand upon my arm.

"Stay here to-night," said he. I started to frame an excuse. "Stay here to-night," he commanded fiercely, his back against the door. He must have read my thoughts, for he said, with a suggestion of a sneer: "They're gone for good; we'll be alone. I need you," he added softly as he put his arm about me; "I want to ask you something." He paced the room a moment, chewing savagely at his mustache, then snarled:

"Why the h—l don't you light a cigar and make yourself comfortable, instead of staring at me like a country wench at a puppet show?" I complied, and he continued to nervously pace the floor, wringing his hands like a woman whose heart is breaking. Suddenly he stopped before me and put his hands on my shoulders. He was trembling like a leaf, his face white as the dead, his eyes glowing like flame.

"Do you believe in the immortality of the soul?"

"Poor devil! he's got 'em," I thought, as I pulled him down on the settee beside me. "Answer me," he commanded. "Do you believe that I'll ever again see those I have loved and lost?" I felt that I had a madman to contend with, and muttered some orthodox commonplaces, hoping to quiet him.

"Answer me like a man! No infernal cant, no damned hypocrisy! I'm no child to be fed on fairy tales and Kris Kringle stories! Do—the—dead—live—again?"

We had risen, and he was holding me in a grip of iron,

his hot breath scorching my cheek, his eyes searching the secret recesses of my soul. The effect was electrical and the reply which leaped to my lips came from the depths of my heart:

“Yes! by the eternal gods, yes!”

He sank down upon the settee and laid his head upon my knee like a tired child. Hoping to soothe him to slumber, I talked to him, caring little what I said.

“Perhaps there are many people not endowed with immortal souls,—are simply and solely animals in the guise of human, of whom God takes little heed. If well fed and housed they rest content. If you strike them they cry out; but when the pain ceases they forget the blow. If their friends die they mourn, much as they would did their house burn down; but gradually the dead drift out of their memories, as the ox forgets his slaughtered mate—are supplanted by new friends, and the current of their lives runs smoothly on. There is no more reason why such people should be accorded immortality than the horse or dog, for undying love is the only excuse for eternal life. Nay, *mon ami*, I do believe there is often more of the Godlike, which defies destruction, in the dumb brutes than in those unto whom they are subject. I have seen a dog mourn itself to death upon its master’s grave—and his widow remarry within the year. I have seen a dumb brute commit suicide when deprived of the companionship of a child—whose mother was busy with the artificialities of fashion before the little grave was green.”

“Stop!” he commanded hoarsely, as he staggered to his feet. He was shaking as one with the palsy and the tears pouring down his cheeks like rain. With a savage movement he turned off the incandescents, leaving the room illumined only by the flickering firelight. He caught at the tablespread to steady himself, then fell heavily,

dragging down the wreck of the banquet-board with a ringing crash.

I knelt beside him and supported his head upon my knee. He was delirious, and kept repeating a feminine name in tones of infinite tenderness. I placed my hand on his forehead, and he lay passive beneath my touch. An electric thrill started at my finger tips, surged up my arm and into my brain. I seemed to lose my identity, to be transformed into an invisible Ariel, following my friend through page after page of the history of his life. Broad farce and fierce tragedy; friendships as true as the eternal stars and hates that would have appalled proud Lucifer,—a devious path he trod; but ever by his side a child, molded of the same weak clay, ablaze with the same celestico-infernal fire. Round and round the tortuous path did run, through sunshine and through shade, through glory and through shame, the silent father and the still more reticent child drawing ever closer, until their two lives seemed but one; but suddenly the man did stand alone, transfixed. I looked for the child and found at his feet only a little grave beneath the Southern pines.

I lingered, but the days wore into weeks, and months and years, and still he stood, speechless, waiting for her to come back to him that he might take up once more the tangled thread of life. The yellow grave grew green, and flowers blossomed in their season above the little mound: the beard of the watcher grew grizzly, and the lines deepened in his face; the storms of adversity beat upon his head and the fire-tongues of foul slander blackened his fair fame; friends upon whose constancy he would have staked his heart fell away as from one accurst, and Ambition's star that once had blazed in mid-heaven like the orb of Bethlehem, faded to a glimmering point and died; but he still maintained his solitary watch beneath the

soughing pines,—day and night, night and day, ever more earnest with each succeeding hour.

The forehead grew cold beneath my touch, the arms were raised as if in joyful greeting, the name of the child sprang to the stiffening lips like a shriek of joy, and I saw her descending in robes of radiant white.

Colder grew the brow, the vision faded, the outstretched arms fell heavily to his side, the long vigil was ended. Zoilus lay dead amid the broken glass and shattered china, the wine-stained tablespread enveloping him like a shroud.

* * *

FACT AND FANCY.

DISHED UP IN BROKEN DOSES.

Too many people forget that while the Lord made the world, the Devil has been busy ever since putting on the finishing touches. Why, he began on the first woman before she was a week old, and he's been playing schoolmaster to the sex ever since. I confess to a sneaking respect for Satan, for he's preëminently a success in his chosen profession. He's playing a desperate game against omnipotent power and is more than holding his own. He sat into the game with a cash capital of one snake, and now he's got half the globe grabbed and an option on the other half.

We are told that Satan is a fallen angel who found pride a stumbling-block—that he tripped over it and plunged down to infinite despair; but though he fell further than a pigeon could fly in a week, the world is full of frauds who could not climb to his level in a month. They are not fallen angels, they are risen vermin. They

didn't come down from thrones in Heaven like falling stars; they crawled up from holes in the earth, like vicious little pismires.

What can proud Lucifer, who defied the bolts of Omnipotent God, and dared give battle to the flaming seraphim; who rocked to its base the eternal throne of Heaven and put forth his daring hand to seize the rod of universal empire; what can such a creature—so godlike in his very ungodliness, the incarnation of reckless courage, the avatar of overt evil, the apotheosis of hate eternal—have in common with the craven hypocrite, who prays with his lips while he's plotting petty larceny in his heart?

Perhaps the most pitiful humbugs beneath high heaven are those intellectual doodlebugs who have become Dame Fashion's devotees and meekly bow their necks to her miserable little goose-yoke; who would sacrifice their immortal souls for appearance's sake—dread the garrulity of Mrs. Grundy more than the wrath of Omnipotent God. Thousands are to-day sailing about in silk hats who are guiltless of undershirts, bedecked with diamonds while in debt to the butcher for the meat on their bones. Families that can scarcely afford calico flaunt Parisian finery, keep costly carriages, while there's a chronic hiatus in their cupboards—go hungry to bed six nights in the week that on the seventh they may spread a brave feast for fashionable fools. God help all such cattle! They are the natural breeders of criminals and courtesans, for in such an atmosphere children grow up mentally dwarfed and morally debased. Fashionable mothers commit their children to the care of serving-maids while they sail out to *soirées* and receptions; put their babes on a bottle while they swing round the social circle. No wonder their

sons grow up sap-heads, as destitute of backbone as a banana, as deficient in moral force as a string o' dead catfish. Think of an infant Napoleon nursing a rubber nozzle! of rearing a Brutus on patent baby-food! of bringing a Hannibal up by hand! You can't do it.

Many of our so-called great men are but featherless geese, possessing a superabundance of gall—creatures of chance, who ride, like pieces of driftwood, on the crest of a wave, raised by forces they cannot comprehend; but they ride and the world applauds them, while it tramples better men beneath its brutal feet. Greatness and gall, genius and goose-speech, sound and sense have become synonyms. Alexander of Macedon was great as measured by the world's standard of eminence. He burned cities, wasted kingdoms, massacred men by the ten thousand, simply to gratify a vicious vanity, then had the audacity to lament that there were no more worlds for him to over-run with his hungry horde of assassins, his army of brutal barbarians. In our own day Father Damien left kindred and country and went forth to die for the miserable lepers in the mid-Pacific; but he is already forgotten—his name and fame have faded from the minds of men. Yet greater and grander than all the blood-stained princes and potentates of earth; nobler, more godlike than all the proud prelates that ever aired their turgid eloquence at ecumenical council was that young priest; but no cenotaph rises to commemorate his sacrifice—silent as his own sealed lips is the trumpet of fame.

For a specimen of audacity that must amaze Deity command me to a crowd of pharisaical plutocrats, piously offering in a hundred thousand dollar church prayers to Him who had not where to lay His head; who pay a preacher \$15,000 per annum to point the way to Paradise,

while children must steal or starve, while women must choose between death and dishonor, and men reared at Christian mothers' knees are driven by grim despair to curse the God who made them, and plunge into a career of crime. Everywhere the widow is battling with want, while these pharisees send Bibles and blankets, salvation and missionary soup to a job-lot of lazy niggers, whose souls ain't worth a sou-markee in blocks of five—who wouldn't walk into Heaven if the gates were wide open, but once inside would steal the eternal throne if it wasn't spiked down. Let the heathen rage; we've got our hands full at home. I'd rather see the whole black-and-tan aggregation short on Bibles than one white child crying for bread.

While Europe and America are peddling saving grace in pagan lands—and expanding the market for their cheap tobacco and forty-rod bug-juice—they are also building warships and casting cannon, preparing to cut each other's throats while prating of the Prince of Peace! The idea of countries that have to build forts on their frontiers and keep colossal standing armies to avoid being butchered by their own Christian brethren—that are filled with penitentiaries and poorhouses, divorce courts and demagogues—sending missionaries to teach the philosophic Hindu the road to Heaven!

That religion which sits up nights to agonize because a few naked niggers in equatorial Africa never heard Eve's snake story, how Job scratched himself with a broken pie-plate, or the hog happened to be so full o' the spirit of Hades; that robs childhood of its pennies to send prayer-books to people whose redemption should begin with a bath, while in our country every town from Cape Cod to Kalamazoo, every city between the Arctic Ocean and the Austral sea is filled with "heathen" who know

naught of the grace of God or the mystery of a square meal; who prowl in the very shadow of our temples of justice, build their lairs in proximity to our public schools and within sound of the collect of our churches, is an arrant humbug—a crime against man, an offense to God, a curse to the world.

* * *

A BROTHERLY REBUKE.

THE APOSTLE'S EPISTLE.

To the Faithful in Texas, Greeting:

THE Apostle is deeply grieved to note that of late there has grown up among ye a disregard of those social decencies long recognized as the necessary correlatives of true Christianity. That "Cleanliness is akin to godliness" ye have all heard; but think ye the sacred text applies only to the person—that so long as ye lave the feet every new moon the spirit may revel in all manner of moral rottenness and be acceptable to the Lord? Verily I say unto you, that 'tis useless to polish the outside of your tin platter with Sapolio and set it in the world's show window, unless you give the inside a swipe; that the man who in the game of life attempts to play both ends against the middle—God and the Devil against Mammon's lay-out—is liable to get left.

Know you, my brethren, that this epistle is not addressed to the Deity, whom ye so oft disgrace, but even unto you; so cry ye not aloud that aught herein doth come beneath blasphemous ban, for ye are not God, but only "poor worms of the dust," crawling, through many an unclean puddle, onward to the grave.

There are many things of which I would speak to you; but what lies heaviest on my heart is the fact that most,

if not all the religious contemporaries of the ICONOCLAST are in the habit of ladling out saving grace with one hand while raking in the shekels with the other for flaming advertisements of syphilitic nostrums, "lost manhood" restorers and kindred quack remedies for diseases with which the faithful are supposed to be unfamiliar. It grieves me to note that the purveyors of "panaceas" for private diseases regard the religious press as the best possible medium of reaching prospective patrons. Why this is so, I know not; but so it is, as every publisher in all the land doth right well know.

Of course, it may be urged that it is the special province of a religious paper to herald "glad tidings of great joy," and that naught could be more grateful to those whom even Hot Springs had failed to help, than to read, in connection with a homily on Holiness, that a panacea for blood poisoning could be bought for a dollar a bottle; or to learn, in connection with a lesson on Christian Duty, that mental and physical powers, weakened by sexual solitaire, can be recuperated at merely nominal cost, and without the necessity of a shameful confession to a local physician.

Still, it doth grieve the Apostle sore to see his brother ministers acting as bell-ringers for quack doctors and assiduously shoving degrading advertisements into the faces of decent people, regardless of age or sex. It shocks his sense of the proprieties to see a great religious journal (see "Editorials by Our Subscribers"—none of whom, we hope, have misplaced their "manhood") like the Texas *Baptist Standard* flaunting in the middle of a page of jejune prattle anent the Holy Spirit, a big display ad. for the "French Nerve Pill"—guaranteed to re-stallionize old *roués*—and following up a long dissertation on "The Weakness of the Baptist Denomination" with an

illustrated notice to the effect that "loss of manly power resulting from bad habits" is cured by certain eastern Cagliostros, who will send, "securely sealed in plain envelope on receipt of 10 cents," a medical treatise "written in plain language." Perhaps the Apostle is entirely too sensitive where the reputation of his brethren in Christ is concerned; but it does grate upon his nerves to see a really good sermon in the Texas *Baptist* and *Herald* flanked by an advertisement of "Pennyroyal Pills"—especially designed to produce abortions!

Of course, we preachers and publishers of sanctified papers cannot expect better things of the secular press, for it is notoriously "out for the stuff;" still to its credit be it said it never interlards its religious news with "Reservation" ads. Justice to the two sectarian journals herein mentioned compels the admission that they are about the cleanest of their kind that have come under our observation. Unfortunately that is saying but little for them, as many of our religious contemporaries accept advertisements that are rejected by reputable dailies as too unclean for even their sporting columns.

It does seem that we publishers of religious papers, who pray frequently and preach occasionally; who work ourselves into a conniption fit unless the Cotton Palace and Dallas Fair are hermetically sealed on Sunday; who belly-ache about blasphemers whenever a scholar presumes to apply historical criticism to the Bible, who insist that we have been divinely ordained to preach a living morality to a dying world; who have discovered the only sure road to the Celestial City, and erected toll-gates thereon, should make a reasonable effort to be decent as well as devout—should refrain from practices that would cause Bob Ingersoll to blush—decline to become the obsequious servants of swindlers whose faces Tom Paine would have

slapped had they dared obtrude their foul carcasses into his presence.

Of course it is difficult in times like these, when the people are far more interested in the price of pork than in forms of baptism for a professional peddler of piety to decline a fat fee proffered by the "Powers of Hell;" still we should ever bear in mind that while in this world we are not of it and be willing to subsist on corn bread and buttermilk here on earth that we may have pie and pound cake hereafter. We should not attempt to straddle the game, to serve two masters in the same column after this manner:

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Ladies, Pennyroyal Pills are Safe and Sure.

Believe and be baptized and ye shall be saved;

Big G Positively Cures the Worst Cases of —

Wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging.

Victims of Secret Vice Should Try Indapo.

Brethren, the Apostle doth beseech that you will not add insult to injury by saucing indecent advertisements with rank hypocrisy. If you persist in prostituting your columns in this manner you will assuredly drive him out of the ministry—self-respect will compel him to withdraw from association with publishers who prate loudly of social purity, yet for a few paltry dollars, undertake to acquaint little children with the foulest phases of human depravity. Brethren, this rebuke is made not in anger, but in sorrow—in the humble hope of leading you back, if not to the path of righteousness, at least to the plane of decency. He can only beseech you to turn from the evil of your ways, and set you a good example. Although the Apostle sometimes calls a spade a spade, he will never insult his patrons by taking it for granted that

they require sub-rosa remedies, or could be persuaded to repeal a law of God with a box of "Pennyroyal Pills." Although not posing as a perfectionist, he would rather commit hara-kiri with a rusty hand-saw and be buried in the Potter's field with a lot of lousy paupers and unclean prostitutes, than become the proudest of plutocrats by publishing such advertisements as appear in a majority of the religious papers of this land of Christ and Cant, Godliness and Greed.

The separate coach law should be so amended as to throw all the inferior races together. Segregating Sambo and permitting lousy Indians, mescal-punishing Mexicans and Chrysanthemum-wearing dudes to mingle with white people is one of those absurdities of legislation with which we will be afflicted so long as we employ cheap labor to make our laws.

The publisher of a daily newspaper declares that several ultra-nice people recently stopped their subscriptions because of a paragraph to the effect that "The hand that folds the diaper is the hand that rocks the world." Well, if some will "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," it is reasonable to suppose that others will absorb with evident relish the racy evidence adduced in divorce courts, then gag on a clean diaper. When godlemighty shapes a man's head like a bed-pan we can hardly expect it to hold much that is valuable.

Perhaps the brightest humorous paper published in the United States is *The Harpoon*, of Houston. "K. Lamity" is really a philosopher—his wit simply the electric light that illumines a marble palace.

VISIONS AND DREAMS.

I GATHER from the reports of his sermons that my old friend Talmage is still troubled with bad dreams,—veritable nightmares, compared with which those Morpheus rode over the convolutions of old Pharaoh's brain were mere cock-horses. But although no Joseph hath yet arisen to interpret the dreams of Brother Talmage, and they are still caviare to the general, we freely concede them the most interesting portion of his sermons. In fact, a Talmagian discourse without a dream or two worked in for condiment, were as stale, flat and unprofitable as a mint julep with John Barleycorn proving an alibi. When a minister stands up before ten thousand supposedly intelligent people and relates his ridiculous dreams, after the “then-I-thought” fashion of the nursery, we must admit that he is entertaining if not instructive. He at least serves to convince the student of natural history that nothing was created in vain; that the fool hath his uses,—that even the incorrigible blatherskite fills a niche in the economy of nature. Noting the superiority of Talmage asleep to Talmage awake, leads me to wonder what kind of an iridescent genius he'll be when he's dead.

While reading his last “dream” I fell asleep (and that's no lie); likewise into his bad habit. I dreamed that the wiggle-tails in a barrel of rain-water under my window were discussing me. They had a tradition that I built the barrel for their especial benefit, and believed they'd eventually grow wings and go to me—and most of 'em did. One smart young wiggler, evidently just from college, ridiculed the tradition and denied my existence. He wanted to know if I made the barrel who made me.

His brethren undertook to argue with him, but as he easily bested them, they concluded that he was guilty of blasphemy and that it was their christian duty to beat the head off him. As they were leading him out to execution I leaned out of the window.

"Here," I demanded; "what are you vermin doing?"

"Good Sir," said an old patriarch with a Sunday face that somehow resembled John Calvin; "this wicked young wiggler denies your existence."

"Well, what of it? I'm here just the same."

"But he takes your name in vain."

"Had you noticed me missing any meals on that account? S'pose I lie awake to sob because a dodgasted little wiggle-tail rears up on the end of his narrative and makes free with my name?"

"But he reviles our holy priesthood and ridicules our religion."

"I thought so. You denounce him, not that he's doing me any harm, but because he has wounded your vanity by questioning your wisdom. You think you're o'erflowing with grace when you're only filled to the nozzle with gall. Now, you subside and attend strictly to your own business, or I'll break up your barrel. When I need a Praetorian guard of wiggle-tails to protect me I'll muster you in."

I have looked through all the dream-books to learn what this remarkable vision may mean, but without avail. Perhaps, like the dreams of Brother Talmage, it simply signified that I had absorbed too much boned turkey and slept on my back.

Don't imagine for one moment that this paper is published expressly to please you.

AN EDITOR'S ERROR.

WE find the following paragraph in the Waco *Telephone*, credited to the San Antonio *Express*: "We will venture a wager that the presidents of the twenty-nine largest banks in Chicago, members of the Merchants' Exchange in St. Louis and the members of the New York Chamber of Commerce know more about finance and the needs of the business world than do the majority of the members of Congress."

Such a proposition is well calculated to impress the ignorant; but, strange as it may appear to the ill-informed, if there are any people on earth who usually know less than nothing of the science of finance, it is the very ones enumerated by the *Express*. The bankers and the successful business men who have added aught to monetary science may be enumerated on the fingers of one hand—leaving off the thumb. They are simply factors in a system with whose fundamental laws they may be wholly unfamiliar. There is no more reason why we should apply to a banker for advice anent problems of national finance, than to a "hello girl" for information regarding the nature of electricity. The men who have given to the world those economic theorems upon which are based the policies of all enlightened nations—like those who have provided its books, science and labor-saving machinery—have seldom been successful business men. Like Agassiz, they "didn't have time to make money"—left the accumulation of filthy lucre to lesser men. Even Sam Randall, the *Express'* beau idol of an economist—and a Democrat—died in poverty most pitiful. I am not disparaging the mental powers of business men. The intellectual average of bankers and mer-

chants is probably above that of politicians, journalists and preachers; still it in nowise follows that because a man has acquired a competence buying soap and sad-irons cheap and selling dear, borrowing money at three and loaning at twelve per cent., juggling the wheat market or jobbing in stocks, he knows any more of monetary science than the wiggle-tails in a barrel of rain-water do of the ocean's tides. To be successful in business a man must devote all his energies thereto,—must consider, not the general welfare, but his personal interests; must study, not how to improve national polities, but how to enhance his own profits. His understanding becomes abnormally keen, but narrow,—his vulpine instinct is developed at the expense of his philosophy. He becomes a master of detail, as incapable of dealing with national problems as a mere drill sergeant to plan the campaigns of Cæsar. But you can never make him believe it! The very moment he accumulates a competence—by close attention to those details that mean death to genius—he begins to pose as a “Napoleon of Finance,” while the probabilities are that to save his immortal soul he could not give a lucid definition of the word “dollar!” He swells out his “fair round belly, with good capon lined,” and looks down with lordly contempt on the ill-fed student of finance. Money is but a trade tool, and the banker who handles a hundred millions of it may no more be able to devise a good monetary system than to build a better watch than the one he wears. A man might invent a perfect trade tool and be unable to trade,—an excellent exchange medium and remain a chronic pauper—while another became a millionaire through the employment of that tool, without understanding its principle. It is an old axiom that the man who can build a locomotive should never be trusted to run one. It is the business of states-

men and economists to build financial locomotives for business men to run. The former must formulate the principle; the latter need only know that the machine will answer the purpose for which it was intended. Many a half-wit girl can "sling the lightning" better than Morse, many a lisping middy command a steamer better than Fulton, many an ignorant stoker run an engine better than Stephenson,—many a fat-head, peddling beer across a bar or absorbed in petty cent per cent., can manipulate money to more advantage than those who gave the wisest monetary systems to the world.

I can understand the man who frequents houses of ill repute. I can even apologize for the man who, like Lincoln, tells a shady story to illustrate a thesis, or make lucid an argument; but I can not comprehend the degradation of that mind which, like a scurvy hog, finds pleasure in wallowing in filth like that furnished by *The Sunday Sun*. Impure blood may drive a weak man to excesses which his mind condemns; but that mind itself should feed on carrion and relish it evidences a mental, not to say moral, depravity that staggers belief. Taste for this class of literature must be acquired, like that for tobacco or opium. Whatever may be the inclinations of the flesh, the mind naturally worships the pure. Our young men appear to think a vitiated literary taste an evidence of manliness, as they once thought an ability to smoke or drink distinguished the dashing man of the world from the common herd. Like Gil Blas, they are eager to be thought gentlemen of intrigue, and so cultivate a taste that stamps them at once as proletarians,—dangerous only to chambermaids. The accomplished *roué* would as soon die with a bullet in his back as to be caught with an obscene publication in his pocket. The most

daring Don Juan I ever knew would not listen to an anecdote that was not chaste as ice. His cheeks would flame like a schoolgirl's at a vulgar word. The imprint of Hell was upon his heart, but it was a Hell of fire, not a Gehenna of corruption. Perhaps the phenomenal success of publications like *The Sunday Sun* is an encouraging sign. It is an evidence that vice is coming down out of the realm of sentiment, of poesy and song, where it endangers the very elect, singes the wings of angels; that it is becoming grossly materialistic, attractive only to stable boys and scullions. When Sir Launcelot lays aside the lute for the coarse compliment, foregoes the bewildering Anacreontic and puts a "personal" in the paper requesting Guinivere to meet him at the corner, we may well hope that the pure in heart are safe. Only buzzards are trapped with carrion.

A little bench-legged fice named Sid Williams, who poses as an "evangelist," recently informed a congregation which he was amusing with his monkey-shines, that the private life of Pagan Bob Ingersoll is notoriously immoral. His authority for this statement being demanded, he brusquely replied that those who desired to learn what kind of a creature he is could write to Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr. A letter was addressed to that magnificent Christian gentleman, who promptly replied that if Ingersoll's private life was not all that it should be, he (Dixon) was not aware of it—that he had reason to believe the morals of the great agnostic would compare favorably with those of the average minister. Just what Williams expected to gain by the perpetration of his stupid falsehood it is difficult to imagine; but perhaps he is another of those intellectual pismires who mistake insult for argument, and hasten to retail disgraceful calumnies without knowing

or caring whether they contain an iota of truth. There are three kinds of liars in this world: The Munchausen, who romances simply for amusement and is careful to harm no one; the Machiavellian liar, whose malicious falsehoods bear the stamp of original genius, and the stupid prevaricator, who rehashes stale calumnies and rechews the fetid vomit of other villains, simply because he lacks a fecund brain to breed lies to which he may play the father. Williams is probably a very choice specimen of the latter class.

In various portions of Texas the Prohibs are pulling themselves together for another tussle with the dreadful "Rum Demon,"—striving to cast a commercial blight over a few more fair cities, to substitute the "blind tiger" for the licensed saloon and transform self-respecting citizens into side-door sneaks. The Prohibs probably mean well; but they are incapable of learning, even in the school of experience, that just so long as whisky is made it will be drunk—that Prohibition means simply a poorer brand of booze. Licensed saloons and their proprietors compete with each other for trade by selling approximately pure liquors; drive the "Rum Demon" into dark alleys and he recoups himself for the added risk by dispensing the cheapest "forty rod" he can find in the market. A man may drink a great deal of good liquor without harm to himself or society; but a few doses of the coffin-paint sold in the average Prohibition town would wreck the constitution of the Cardiff giant, or cause a consistent Christian to kill his grandmother.

THE AGE OF CONSENT.

ARE the various legislatures of this alleged land of Christ composed chiefly of "chippy chasers," of lecherous libertines eager to despoil little schoolgirls—of unclean creatures who would violate the very cradle to feed lust's unholy fires?

No? Then why is it they persistently decline to give the little girls legal protection from moral destruction? Why is it that they deliberately disregard public opinion and turn a deaf ear to the pleading of ten thousand mothers, if they have not formed "a league with death and a covenant with Hell?"

I will be told that our law-builders, like Brutus and his brother conspirators, are "honorable men." Did an honorable man ever yet decline to protect youth and innocence to the utmost of his power?

What is the record of the American legislatures anent this important matter? Most of them fixed the age of consent at ten years. Think of it, ye men with daughters completing their first decade! The men chosen by popular vote to make laws for a people boasting of their enlightenment declared that a girl scarce old enough to prepare her trundle-bed or dress her dolls was amply qualified to pass upon the most momentous question that can confront her between the cradle and the grave! One state actually fixed seven years as the age at which a girl may legally "consent" to carnal intercourse, her ravisher, though a full-grown man, not being liable to punishment for rape. And this is the country that is building laws to shield from destruction the "Christian Sabbath," sending missionaries to the antipodes to carry prayer-books and Bibles to barbarians—tithing itself to

build palatial churches and provide legislative bodies with perfunctory prayer!

God of Israel, what a gall!

I lay it down as an impregnable proposition that the men who enacted these laws were knaves or they were fools. They were either corrupt to the heart's core, or if it were fulsome flattery to brand them as burros. If fools they should have been caged, if knaves they should have been hanged. Their infamous legislation has left a foul blot on American civilization which centuries cannot erase. When the antiquarian of the future finds those revolting statutes in the ruins of our marble capitols he will decline to dignify us by calling us barbarians—he will brand us as brutes!

A decade ago the age of consent in England was thirteen years. A careful investigation resulted in the disclosure of crimes against children that appalled the civilized world. Parliament promptly raised to sixteen the age at which a female may legally part with that priceless jewel of her soul, her chastity. Gladstone insisted on eighteen years, but was overruled by the younger members, many of whom had mistresses under that age. The agitation spread to America, where for ten years the ladies, supported by public opinion, the pulpit and the press, have attempted to secure legal protection for their little daughters.

In twenty-nine States and Territories the age of consent still ranges from ten to fourteen years. A few States have been induced, after an heroic struggle, to raise it to sixteen, even eighteen years, and, now, as if ashamed of this concession to common decency, are trying to reduce it again. The Texas legislature did finally consent a few years ago to increase from ten to twelve the age at which a babe is privileged to become a bawd; but the

victory cost the ladies a severe struggle. The matter has been brought forcibly to the attention of the present legislature, and the senate has actually succeeded—after much industrious lobbying by the ladies—in passing, over powerful opposition, a bill raising the age of consent to fifteen years; also one prohibiting the sale of cigarettes to "children under sixteen!" What the fate of this bill in the house will be I do not at this writing (February 12) know; but it is safe to say the most potent, grave and reverend jackasses—who consider cigarette smoking a crime and fornication but a venial fault—will consent to no improvement.

As matters now stand in Texas an unmarried woman of twenty cannot legally purchase a bottle of beer or sell a foot of land. At seventeen she cannot legally contract an honorable marriage without the consent of parents or guardian; she is an infant in the purview of the law—for every purpose but prostitution! She is not mistress of her property until twenty-one, but mistress of her person at twelve!

I lay down the proposition that when a girl is old enough to be intrusted with the guardianship of her virtue she is old enough to contract a marriage without asking permission of anyone; that when she is old enough to become an unclean prostitute she is old enough to become an honorable wife—that when she is old enough to dispose of her person she's old enough to dispose of her property.

The man who will have carnal intercourse with a child under fourteen years of age, with or without her consent, should be burned alive. The man who will be criminally intimate with a girl under seventeen years of age should be castrated—then shot. Yet of all the American States but three decline to consider him guilty of rape.

In Texas the child of twelve is placed on a parity with the woman of forty, so far as sexual intercourse is concerned. When Congressman Breckinridge seduced a grown woman, well versed in the ways of the world, millions of people cried "Shame!" Yet his offense was no greater in the eye of the law than though he had coaxed some twelve-year-old Texas girl with a box of bon-bons to submit to his brutish desires. When a middle-aged married woman is "led astray" we denounce her "destroyer" as worthy of death; yet we take precious good care to protect with the law the life of the lecherous brute who despoils her young daughter.

I do not know of a single reason why the age of consent should not be at least seventeen years in every State of the Union; nor can I understand why any lawmaker, laying the slightest claim to respectability, should object to raising it to that figure. I believe that if the question were submitted to a vote of the very bagnio keepers and blacklegs it would carry by a big majority, for they still retain some respect for pure womanhood, and are not sunk so low in the scale of human degradation as to deny legal protection to children. I can understand the man who considers that when a girl has reached maturity she is lawful prey for whosoever can despoil her; I cannot understand why the legislature of any State should decline to protect little schoolgirls in every possible manner, unless it be dominated by lecherous demons more utterly depraved than those that inhabit the amen-corner of Hell.

JONAH'S GOURD.

CIRCUMSTANCES over which he seems to have had no control made Jonah the prototype of the modern panic-builder; *facile princeps* of chronic kickers, the high priest of professional calamity howlers. He received a call to cry against Nineveh because of its cussedness, but seems to have had a presentiment that the job wouldn't pay, and made a desperate attempt to jump it. We are not advised what awful wickedness the city planted by Ninus and watered by Sennacherib had been guilty of. Perhaps a Democratic Congress had declined to add \$500,000,000 to the interest-bearing burden of the people for the special behoof of the plutocracy. The people may have blasphemed the Golden Calf, declared for the money of the constitution, or hinted that they were better off when wrestling with the flesh-pots of Republicanism than trailing a mugwump king across barren deserts to a Babylonian captivity. Or they may have neglected to give the first fruits and fat of the land to the Lord—via the larders of the Levites. Certain it is that Nineveh had gotten off on the wrong foot, and Jonah was sent to "cry against it" and enable it to strike the proper gait. Like all the Jews of his generation, Jonah supposed that Jehovah ruled over but a small territory—that by crossing a State line he could get beyond his jurisdiction and into the bailiwick of other gods; so he boarded a packet plying between Joppa and Tarshish and "fled from the face of the Lord." It did not occur to the good man that Jehovah might have an extradition treaty with the Tarshish deity, or that he might make an excursion into foreign territory and recapture the runaway at the imminent risk of precipitating a celestico-international

complication. Jonah probably did not suppose that Jehovah was cooped up in the Ark of the Covenant like the fisherman's genie in the vessel of copper, and uncorked only when the enemies of Israel became troublesome or some new people were to be despoiled of their corn and cattle, their vines and virgins; still, he imagined, like many people of the present day, that the Almighty clung pretty close to the amen-corner. But before the patron saint of amateur fishermen and professional falsifiers could get clear of the legal three-mile coast limit of Israel's God, that potentate pulled down on him with a double-barreled hurricane and a muzzle-loading leviathan. The aim was true, and Jonah tumbled. When he found himself in the belly of the big fish our peripatetic prophet from Galilee—which appears to have been the ancient Georgia—repented of his sins. We all do when they fail to pay the expected dividends. Jonah decided that he would rather go to Nineveh and found a Cleveland calamity club than travel, a perpetual passenger, in the prototype of Jules Verne's Nautilus; so he offered up penitential prayers, made fair promises and was permitted to go ashore.

“The Lord spake to the fish and it vomited Jonah upon dry land.”

Pictures of the prophet walking ashore, with the lower jaw of the whale for a gang-plank, are quite plentiful; but his remarks on that occasion have not been preserved. The kodak fiend seems to have been waiting for him, but the ubiquitous interviewer failed to get in his graft. Perhaps it is just as well; but it gives us a poor opinion of ancient journalism. During the three days and nights the prophet was a cabin passenger his whaleship must have swallowed a vast variety of the denizens of the deep, and it were interesting to know if Jonah lived happily with them, and if they came ashore when he did, or con-

tinued their voyage. Perhaps some devout defender of the inerrancy of the Bible will yet consent to be swallowed by a whale for a few days in order to give the world a realistic account of Jonah's remarkable journey.

But although our hero vigorously objected to becoming a calamity howler he took a wonderful interest in his work when he once got into harness. He was only commissioned to conduct a camp-meeting revival in Nineveh and rail against its moral rottenness; but he determined to "bring a corollary rather than want a spirit," so he began to bawl in the streets.

"Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

Such a calamity cry as that, coming from a man whom we have no evidence had taken a bath or changed his shirt since associating with the whale, was enough to frighten a marble caryatide into convulsions. The entire population, from the King on his throne to the wingless buzzard who wrote anonymous communications to the editor of the Nineveh *Morning Bazoo*, informing him that he was an iridescent ass, donned their sackcloth suits, sat in the ashes and failed to come up to their feed. In those old days a man who filled his hair with hickory ashes and boycotted his barber and his belly, was supposed to be an especially agreeable sight to the good God; hence we can hardly wonder that he promptly repealed the act authorizing the free coinage of calamities. Just what awful punishment would have been inflicted upon the fair city had the people refused to rend their garments and run their noses in the sand, we are left to conjecture. The Lord might have sunk it beneath a sea of bitter waters as He did Sodom, sent the seventeen-year locusts, or saddled it with a mugwump administration. But the God of the Jews seems to have ever been open to conviction. That's where he differed from Grover Cleveland. The Lord

eventually pulled his prophet of evil off the perch; but Cleveland strives manfully to fulfill every panic-breeding prediction of his faithful cuckoos.

After the hot wave prognosticator had put out his bulletins he got him out of the city, so as not to slip on his own banana peel, built a jackal a considerable distance from the spot where his curse was to get into action, and deliberately sat him down to see the show. He expected nothing less than the utter destruction by a gracious God of the city in which were 60,000 infants—"also much cattle."

The summer climate of Nineveh was almost as sultry as that of St. Louis; and as Jonah lay in his hut with his tongue hanging out the Lord took pity on him and caused a gourd to spring up to comfort him with its shade. There Jonah lay, day after day, we are led to suppose, looking off toward Nineveh, eager to see fire and brimstone descend from Heaven on a million happy homes—to inhale the sweet incense of three score thousand helpless babes burned alive! On the morning of the fortieth day we may well suppose that he arose bright and early. This is the day that is to prove him a true prophet and assure him the patronage of princes and potentates, or proclaim him a garrulous old guy with a disordered liver and an ill-balanced head. Either Nineveh or the prophet must be overthrown.

Beyond the Tigris the heralds of the sun are flaming in the sky. Now the great day-god shows his shining disc, lingers a moment as though loth to leave Aurora's loving arms, then wheels upward in stately majesty and pours his golden splendors full upon Assyria's mighty capital. The people awake from refreshing slumber, and the streets resound with the same drowsy hum that for a thousand years has been heard in that ancient center of civilization.

The merchant goes about his business, the gude house-wife borrows soap and sad irons of her neighbor and gossips with her over the back fence about the new priest of Baal; the King and his courtiers go forth to hunt the wild boar and the bride decks herself for the nuptial rites. Jonah begins to fidget beneath his gourd and glances often upward, wondering if the consignment of blazing brim-stone had been side-tracked by another celestial revolution, such as that of which Milton sings. The sun sinks like a globe of gold into the plain far beyond the Zab, and the crescent moon is trying to clasp Love's brilliant star to her concave breast. The ring of the hammer and the shrill cry of the herdsmen are hushed, and from park and garden come peals of mirth and music, the dreamy cadence of dancing feet on polished cedar floors, and the sensuous perfume of dew-bespangled flowers. Pyramus is bending his steps to old Ninus' lonely tomb to meet his lovely Thisbe; in the banquet hall the golden goblet brims with nectarous wine such as Samos never knew, and perfumed lamps cast a ruddy glow on giant warriors and women fair as ever cast in mortal mold. The hour grows late, the music ceases; the hum dies slowly out, and the midnight quiet is broken only by the prayer of an ascetic worshiping the host of Heaven, the yoop of an unhappy married man going home from the primaries in charge of a pair of policemen. Nineveh is going to bed just as though no whale had swallowed Jonah—then puked him up when it discovered that he had a "call to preach."

When Jonah learned that the show for which he was acting as press agent had collapsed, he proceeded to file a vigorous kick. That was perfectly natural. No matter how terrible a prophet's predictions may be, he earnestly desires that they come to pass. Jonah had shrieked calamity until his tongue was parched, yet nothing serious

had happened. No wonder that he felt that his star was evil—that through no fault of his own a great three-cornered hiatus had been kicked in his political fences. So he went to the Lord, we may fairly infer from the trend of the narrative, and said:

“Look here, you’ve busted me up in business. I’d ‘a’ been a hanged sight better off had I taken my stand squarely on the Chicago platform and defended the money of the constitution instead of joining the mugwumps and clamoring for currency contraction.”

The Lord said unto Jonah, in substance, though probably not in these exact words:

“The calamity clacker, like the cut-worm and the cholera microbe, hath its uses. Here was Nineveh growing careless. It had been prosperous so long under Republican paganism that it was losing sight of the eternal principles of Jeffersonian Democracy. The old town had become deaf to argument and indifferent to political duty; so I stirred you up to grow a crop of anarchical whiskers, an abnormal gall, and spout calamity from the beer-kegs at the corners. You have served my purpose. I will now cut down your gourd, and you must sing small or the sun will shine into you and sour you.”

* * *

A CARNIVAL OF CRIME.

DURING the year 1894 there were about 9,800 homicides and but 132 legal executions reported in the United States. I have no later statistics at hand; but it is conceded, I believe, that crimes of this kind are steadily on the increase, while the disproportion between the number of homicides and hangings continues to grow greater. As matters now stand, one might slay a fellow mortal every

year and stand an excellent chance of dying of old age, so far as the courts are concerned. You may go upon the streets, insult a man, provoke him to offer you violence, shoot him down like a dog, and, if able to employ eminent counsel to behedge you with legal technicalities and befuddle the jury, go scot free; or failing in that, put the public to an expense of several thousand dollars in excess of what your cowardly carcass is worth, and escape with a short term in some comfortable penitentiary, where you will be well cared for, taught a good trade and regularly prayed for at the expense of law-abiding people. What is the result? The people, despairing of legal protection from the armed thug, take the law into their own hands—invoke the power of Judge Lynch to defend their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. There are more lynchings than legal executions. In 1894 the first reached the appalling number of 190. That is indeed a terrible record of lawless violence, but it were idle to declaim against the effect without removing the cause. The American people are naturally law-abiding; but above and beyond their respect for courts is their inherent sense of justice—paramount even to the law of the land is the law of self-preservation. Theorists may protest and sentimentalists rend their nether garments and spill their ready tears; but so long as the assassin is white-washed by the courts and the rape-fiend turned loose to prey upon pure homes, Judge Lynch will continue to hold his midnight sessions—the shotgun will continue to roar in the hands of maddened mobs and the lonely tree groan beneath its grawsome burden. Is it any wonder that the people lose patience? In Judge Lynch's court there is no eminent counsel skilled in the esoteric art of protecting crime; no change of venue; no mistrials; no appeals; no postponements to give important witnesses time to die or get away;

no one-year terms in the penitentiary for the brutal assassin or infamous rape-fiend. We have "reformed" our jurisprudence until the contention of the courts with the great tide of crime suggests Dame Partington's unequal combat with the sea. By assiduously trundling her mop she was able to fill her bucket with brine; and by laboriously grinding the courts to succeed in cramming the penitentiaries—with small-fry thieves and people too poor to employ skilled counsel. Our courts have become mere circumlocution offices, winding and unwinding red tape, instead of the sinewy arm of justice wielding the unerring sword. Our judges are usually learned and upright, our juries eager to administer justice, our officers active and the public heart in the right place; but it avails not—our system is all wrong. We make too many laws, then involve them in a mass of legal verbiage which permits a skilled sophist to demonstrate to the untrained mind that they mean what best serves the interest of his client. It is common cant that "the people make the laws." They do not. The lawyers make them, and that with the full understanding that the more intricate the legal machinery may be, the more need of experts, the fatter the harvest of fees. All the criminal laws this country needs could be printed in a pamphlet no larger than the ICONOCLAST, together with full instructions for their enforcement; made so plain that the most stupid juror could understand them—and in simplicity there is strength. "Thou shalt not kill," says the Bible; and the sentence stands out like a star. The penalty for violation of this law is death, unless it plainly appeared that the killing was accidental or done in self-defense. The trial was immediate, and, if conviction followed, the culprit turned over to the "avenger of blood." No provision for experts to pass upon the sanity of the prisoner, no

prattle of hypnotism, no searching of the community for the greatest numskulls to determine the case, no reversals on legal technicalities, no penitentiary and convict labor problem—no lawyers! A careful, common-sense inquiry, honorable acquittal or conviction and immediate execution. The jury constitutes the chief feature of our legal machinery, a feature in full accord with our theory of popular sovereignty; but we have so hedged it about with foolish restrictions that, instead of being the ancillary of Justice, it has become a veritable bulwark of Crime. We select as jurors, not those who know most about the case, but those who know least. When an atrocious crime is committed we set aside as unavailable those who have kept in touch with current events, and select a jury from the residue. In these days of rapid transit and daily papers all men of average intelligence are soon informed of every crime of consequence committed in their county, even in their State; and no one gifted with a thinking apparatus can avoid arriving at some conclusion regarding all he sees and hears. As a rule, we get together twelve of the most consummate blockheads in the county—a dime museum of mental freaks—permit them to be further obfuscated by artful counsel, whose business it is to “make out a case” for or against, as goes the fee, then lock them up until the most obstinate jackass in the corral dominates the herd or compels a compromise. Sometimes there are two or more burros of equal obstinacy; a mistrial results, and the case goes over to the next term of court. The public loses interest in it—is absorbed in the contemplation of new crimes—and if the culprit is eventually convicted and properly punished the people regard it as a special dispensation of Providence. Punishment, to have a repressive effect, must be not only sure but swift. The law’s delay—coupled with its uncertainty—encour-

ages crime. More than five years ago, and on several occasions since then, the Iconoclast suggested that jurors be elected by the people like other county officers—that every county select nine men of approved worth to try criminal cases, and establish the majority rule. This would relieve the citizen of a disagreeable duty for which he is often in nowise qualified, and insure for jury service men capable of analyzing evidence and arriving at just conclusions. Let the vote of the jury in criminal cases be made a matter of public record, and thereby fix the responsibility for every miscarriage of justice. Only attorneys employed by the State should be permitted to appear in criminal cases. These should be skilled lawyers, but in no sense prosecuting attorneys, intent only upon securing conviction and pocketing a comfortable fee. Their business should be to elicit facts for the jury to pass upon, and act as counselors to the court in questions of law. The attorney who will, with equal readiness, employ his skill to acquit a felon or hang an innocent man, should speedily become a forgotten factor in our criminal jurisprudence. In March, 1895, I called attention to these needed reforms, and well-nigh in the same words; but a question involving the lives of 10,000 Americans annually cannot be too frequently called to the attention of our publicists and the people.

* * *

THE APOSTLE'S BIOGRAPHY.

I AM pleased to learn from some of my contemporaries that I am an ex-convict, who tramped into Texas carrying a false trade-mark; that I have been driven out of several cities, and fired by various managers of morning newspapers; that I have been thrashed by aged cripples, and

compelled to make retractions in the public prints. That is by no means the entire catalogue of my high crimes and misdemeanors, as set forth by my industrious biographers; but is sufficient to show that as an original sinner neither St. Paul nor Sam Jones was a circumstance to myself. To become chief of the rogues in this era of rampant rascality were indeed a distinction; but being a modest man, I shall refrain from assuming the post of honor in the nether pantheon until my right thereto is fully established.

My biographers are sadly derelict in their duty, or they would have discovered my pre-Texas cognomen and the location of the prison in which I clanked my chain. The cities from which I was expelled should be marked on the map, and sworn statements by reputable citizens anent these interesting episodes made matters of record. The affidavits of publishers who have willingly dispensed with my services, would give to the work an historical accuracy calculated to impress the public. Photographs of all the aged cripples who have walked my log should illumine the book, while a facsimile of some retraction I have printed would make an appropriate frontispiece.

From the foundation of the world the falsehood has been the defensive weapon of the fool. Assail him with logic and he answers with lies; lash him with sarcasm and he retorts with calumny; impale him on the rapier of ridicule and he deluges you with brutal defamation.

While it is true that no creature rising to the moral level of the mangy coyote, the intellectual altitude of an acephalous louse, will utter a malicious lie, it is likewise true that no one within whose heart there pulses one drop of gentle blood; within whose brain there was ever born a noble thought; within whose soul there is enshrined the instincts of a manly man, will retail a story calculated

to injure a fellow craftsman—even if he knows it to be true. The respectable journalist, the well-bred gentleman, is ever ready to break a lance in intellectual tourney—to prove his powers on the Field of the Cloth of Gold—but he leaves the throwing of stink-pots to Chinamen, the exploitation of night-soil to scavengers, the peddling of stale falsehoods to fools, the concocting of unclean calumnies to cowards.

* * *

A MAID'S MISTAKE.

A DEFENSE OF THE BEAUTEOUS REBECCA.

THE King of Corea is anxious to found a harem, and it is hinted that he has dispatched agents to Houston to see if Miss Rebecca Merlindy Johnson, of the *Post*, is really so pretty as report hath painted her.—*Waco News*.

Ye gods! has American journalism come to this? O tempora! O mores! O mamma! How can our representative dailies deliberately mock the misfortunes of a fair young maid, simply to make a hoodlum holiday? Rebecca may have erred; but can she be reformed by drawing a rat-tail file across her milk-white teeth and coupling her name in brutal jest with that of a barbaric Mongol, who wears his eyes cut bias and the narrative of his nether garments floating wide upon the wandering air? True it is that Rebecca's unhappy custom of donning male attire and posing as a man, at press conventions and on the public streets, is a great temptation to the sacrilegious paragraphers to let slip the biting epigram and ribald jest; but they should remember that while Rebecca is as beautiful as a spotted pup she was never bright, and pass her little idiosyncrasies o'er in silence.

Although Rebecca has gone astray the ICONOCLAST feels for her only the profoundest pity, and it will permit no one to make her a target for the chilly sneer or heap upon her humbled head great wads of withering scorn. Dear! dear! how sad it seems that one so young should feel the heavy hand of unkind fate—Hope's fair morning overcast with the dun clouds of grim despair! How pitiful that the bright dream of a young life should be dispelled, the cloud-capped temple of Love, in which she expected to wander ever, but a frightful Fata Morgana—the golden Apples of Hesperides for which in holy faith and trust she held out her blue-veined hand, turned to bitter Dead Sea fruit! Alas! The great heart of the ICONOCLAST bleeds for Houston's unfortunate belle, once so imperial in her pride, now brought so low that the very dogs no longer pause in front of her office, despite the seductive sign, "*Houston Post.*" How often, oh how often, as her sad romance came rustling through our mind like an unhappy ghost shrieking and sobbing through Fancy's incorporeal halls, have we put aside our goose-quill pen and corncob pipe and retired to the dim seclusion of the woodshed to uncork by stealth the briny tear and tie loose the melancholy moan. It may be unmanly, but we always feel better, nobler, purer afterwards—better qualified to instruct the legislature and lead the State out of its financial follies.

Born beneath the sometimes sunny skies of the great Goober State, of poor but honest parents, Rebecca grew up, neglected but beautiful, soulful, an impulsive child of nature. A liberal diet of 'possum, peanuts and corn pone, encouraged in its onward course by gourds of buttermilk and an occasional nip from a moonlight still, rapidly rounded out the lissom form, and running barefoot over the red hills in joyous sport with the young coons gave to her a majestic carriage which Juno might have envied.

Thus the happy years sped on, as years are wont to do, until the heroine of this thrilling novelette had reached the age of consent, when many a young gallant awooing came and sought to toll the matchless beauty forth to candy pullings, singin' skules, log rollings and other hilarious gatherings where the youth and beauty of back districts meet, to slobber over each other, or chase the glowing hours with flying feet.

But Rebecca was ambitious and scorned the clumsy advances of the wool-hat boys. She yearned for the glory of fame and the glamour of wealth. Her soul mounted above such plebeian occupations as boiling soft-soap, deodorizing diapers and building crackling bread. Poor child! She could not understand as yet that the hand that wields the slipper is the hand that rocks the world; hence she turned her back upon domestic joys and sought fame and fortune on the mimic stage—played Pauline in Claude Melnotte with such effect that soon she wore as cestus a string of bleeding hearts. Pity that she failed to heed the solemn warning so often given:

“Pauline, through pride angels have fallen ere thy time.”

Rebecca’s triumph on the stage but fired her fond ambition for loftier flights. She was no longer content to parrot the words of others, but would write—would dally with the delusive pen, weapon more powerful than the sword. The sock and buskin were exchanged for the gilded sanctum, and here the proud beauty and the “Apostle” met. The queen of the stage, who had resisted the temptations of the green-room and the seductive rhythm of Cracker poetry, surrendered at discretion, and entered, with all the ardor of a woman whose charms are waning, upon that intoxicating yet dangerous dream of bliss that—oh lackaday!—was too sweet to last.

While Menelaus was far from home, assiduously hustling the wherewithal to discharge the family butcher bills, old Priam's roving son did steal away the matchless Helen—and history repeats itself. While the "Apostle" was absent—trying to enforce the Sunday law in San Antonio and cording up shekels wherewith to purchase a gilded cage for this bright Bird o' Paradise—Epictetus Paregoric Hill did abstract from him the fond affections of the fair Rebecca. Nor was this all. Paregoric proceeded to uncork himself in the columns of the *Houston Post* and add insult to injury. He cried aloud unto the powers that be to tie the saintly "Apostle" up and spread upon his shrinking diaphragm nine-and-thirty cruel lashes, for no other crime than that he had loved, not wisely but too well. As Paregoric's fierce appeal was pigeon-holed, perhaps he'll yet conclude to tackle the job himself—will lift the "Apostle's" cuticle and make thereof a silken purse for his old sweetheart.

But we bear Epictetus Paregoric no shade of malice. He could not help loving Rebecca. If he will but deal honestly by her all will be forgiven. Whether he has done so thus far we do not know; but the poor girl's sad demeanor and the fact that she has been an inmate of an asylum for the erring, leads us to fear the worst. Her conscience is evidently hurting her, and day by day that exuberant gladness, that was once her glory, is departing, leaving her moody and abstracted as the man who fails to keno. Is it possible that she regrets the days that are no more? That in the still night she dreams of the "Apostle" and smiles again—thinks him still at the old desk, grinding out editorial copy, for which she cheerfully takes the credit? When she wakes and finds it all a dream, does she wish that she had awaited his return, even as Penelope waited for Ulysses, instead of playing Annie

to his Enoch Arden and tying fast to a pink-haired plug God in His inscrutable wisdom has permitted to accumulate a little wealth, while brainier men are trailing the meek-eyed mule in the lowly cotton-path?

Poor Rebecca! Did mischievous Puck pour into the soulful eyes of the "Apostle's" fair Titania some curst decoction that caused her to dote on a piebald ass and mistake his ears for angel's wings, his fiery muzzle for a seraph's radiant nimbus? Or do you possess beneath that fair exterior all the frailties of Hamlet's desiring dam, who is supposed to have left a celestial bed to prey on garbage? We do not know; but be it as it may, the "Apostle" will remain forever your guardian angel—will gather you beneath his wing even as the careful hen gathereth some other bench-legged gosling, and protect you from the wintry scorn of those cruel papers, that cannot understand that though you have sinned you have also suffered. Be virtuous, Rebecca, and you may be happy yet.

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EDITORIAL ETCHINGS.

LONG SERMONS IN SHORT PARAGRAPHS.

THE last bond sale consummated by the Cleveland Administration should be made the subject of a searching investigation by Congress as soon as it assembles. It was either a piece of premeditated rascality or the worst case of official incompetency the century affords. The Administration wanted gold with which to bolster up its foolish financial fetich, and proceeded to sell 30-year 4 per cent. bonds to the extent of some sixty-two millions. These government obligations were offered in the open market to the highest bidder, but were sold secretly

to a syndicate of capitalists at a price below that which the bonds of third- and fourth-class powers bring. It was urged by the Administration—which had long been attempting to “bear” the bond market by predicting all manner of monetary ills—that the price, a trifle less than $104\frac{1}{2}$, was the best that could possibly be obtained. The syndicate then offered these same “coin” bonds in New York and London, at a minimum price of $112\frac{1}{2}$, there was a tremendous rush for them, 118 was offered, and twenty times the amount of the issue could have been placed at fancy prices in as many minutes! By this deal the syndicate made more than \$6,000,000 in one day! The capitalists of two continents enthusiastically gave the lie to the assertion of our calamity-clacking Administration that the credit of the country was at a low ebb—that the bonds had been disposed of to the best possible advantage. Capitalists are ever ready to pay a liberal commission on such “pick-ups,” and the star-chamber manner in which the sale was consummated indicates that both Cleveland and Carlisle were acting as bunco-steerers while Uncle Sam starred in the rôle of the sucker. If they did get a share of the rake-off they should be impeached and put in the penitentiary; if they did not they should be sent to the lunatic asylum. Congress should lose little time in determining whether they are a brace of knaves or a pair of fools. That they are one or the other is as gross to sense as the sun at noonday.

Ex-Priest Slattery and his ex-nun wife are still at large in the land, pandering to anti-Catholic prejudice and collecting money of cranks. We have in this country a large contingent of ignorant fanatics who really believe that the Roman Catholic church is intent on overturning the American government and supplanting the President

with the Pope, who are quite sure that the priesthood is a colossal aggregation of rogues and the convents but cloaks for all manner of immorality. The fact that the Pope has frequently expressed his admiration for the American government; that every convocation of Catholic prelates in this country has breathed the spirit of patriotism and tolerance; that the Catholics were among the first to establish religious liberty in the western world; that they have aided in the upbuilding of this mighty nation, have participated in its councils, supported it with their treasure in the hour of trial and bedewed its every battlefield with their blood—counts for nothing with these narrow-minded bigots, these hate-inflamed fanatics.

“Convince a man against his will,
He'll hold the same opinion still.”

It is to this class, the class responsible for that un-American organization known as the A.P.A.—Aggregation of Pusillanimous Asses—that ex-Priest Slattery panders. There are probably bad priests and unchaste nuns. With some hundreds of Protestant preachers in our penitentiaries—and as many of their female parishioners branded as bawds—it were indeed remarkable if all priests were paragons of purity; but Slattery's sweeping denunciation is simply slander for which he would be promptly punished by due process of law did Catholic prelates consider him worthy their serious consideration. Slattery is becoming a white elephant on the hands of the American authorities. The Catholic prelates decline to prosecute him, while the laity attempt to stop his blackguard bazoo with a bludgeon. In protecting him the authorities realize that they are shielding a foul-mouthed calumniator and brazen adventurer, and that if they decline to do so

they will be arraigned by the aforesaid Aggregation of Pusillanimous Asses for "permitting the Church of Rome to throttle the American right of free speech." It is safe to say that should an apostate Protestant publicly prefer the same sweeping charges against the clergy and the female members of their flocks that Slattery prefers against the priests and nuns, no power between the two oceans could prevent him being torn to pieces and his foul carcass fed to the buzzards. The simple fact that Slattery is alive to-day is a glorious tribute to the Christian charity of the Roman Catholic church.

We are credibly informed that Judge L. C. Alexander is holding the "Little Giant" back by the narrative of his nether garment from a controversy with the ICONOCLAST anent the currency question. We trust that the muslin is warranted not to rip and that the Judge will never relax his hold, for the ICONOCLAST can scarce afford controversies with undergraduates of economic kindergartens, or to waste much powder on political kildees. We opine, however, that the "Little Giant" is not hard to hold. His recent attempt to repeat the Samsonian miracle—to annihilate the free silver philistines with the jawbone of an ass—could scarce be called a success. The great world stood agaze and strong men sobbed with fear when he took the field, but his dialectical diaper seems to have slipped its safety-pin, and he retired amid the ribald remarks of the unfeeling rabble. "Linseed" will experience but little trouble in keeping "Warwick" in out of the weather.

The ICONOCLAST is pleased to note that one blast upon its bugle-horn was sufficient to banish unsavory advertisements from the columns of its religious contemporaries.

The objectionable ads faded before its criticism like a hot apple pie in the hands of a hired man, and most of those periodicals that peddle piety at so-much per annum, cash in advance, can now be read by respectable people, if not with profit, at least without danger of getting their sanctification mixed with syphilitic nostrums, their pious fervor rendered abortive by pennyroyal pills. The Apostle has kindly consented to play guardian angel to sectarian editors until orthodoxy and common decency become correlatives.

The New York senate recently passed a bill providing the whipping-post for wife-beaters, and in a number of other States corporal punishment for petty criminals is being urged by intelligent editors and progressive public men. As might have been expected, this movement has provoked a prolonged howl from those pseudo-philanthropists who assume that it is the duty of the State to gently lead, by means of moral suasion, all thieves and thugs through a primrose path to that exalted plane where every prospect pleases and man heeds Sam Jones' solemn warning to quit his meanness. These sentimentalists are ready to slop over whenever it is proposed to mete out really efficacious punishment to the criminal class. They denounce the whipping-post as a "relic of barbarism," altogether forgetting the fact that the wife-beater is also a survival of semi-savagery and should be dealt with as such. In most American States the same kind of punishment is meted out to all classes of offenders—to the high-bred gentleman who resents an insult with a blow, and to the cowardly cur who clubs his wife; to the man whom passion has led to fracture the Seventh Commandment, and to the lustful demon who despoils a little child. The offenses which men commit

indicate their character and the civilization to which they have attained, and should suggest the punishment best calculated to deter others of their class from the commission of kindred crimes. Imprisonment and convict stripes may prove a terrible punishment to a morbidly sensitive man, whose honor is the dearest jewel of his soul; but to the wife-beater or burglar incarceration means only an inconvenience. We have carried judicial "reform" entirely too far, and are now rapidly drifting back to the wisdom of our fathers, who were strict constructionists of the Mosaic law. Tie up the wife-beaters, give them fifty lashes well laid on, then turn them loose to hustle a living for their better halves. We cannot afford to waste much time or money on that class of cattle.

The Apostle is pleased to learn that the gallant Governor Culberson has appointed to a position on his gilded staff the beautiful and accomplished Miss Rebecca Merlindy Johnson, private secretary and *valet de chambre* to Editor Hill of the *Houston Post*. It is the first time in the history of Texas that a lady has been appointed to such a position—but what were King Charles without his Jeanne d'Arc? Whether the Maid of Happy Hollow will adhere to the side-saddle peculiar to her sex, or follow the example of the Maid of Orleans and wear her fiery Bucephalus clothes-pin fashion, we are not informed; but may safely take it for granted that she'll appear on parade in skin-tight trousers, booted, spurred, and bearing on the port side of her expansive beam the little tin butter knife which distinguishes from the common herd a member of the gubernatorial body-guard. Attired in gaudy regiments that would shame Solomon in all his glory, and bearing her blushing honors thick upon her, Rebecca Merlindy will loom up on muster days and parade like a

circus pageant in Poseyville, and even the most captious critic will concede the safety of the country. Hostile potentates and powers will take one glance at the dreadfulness of our bedizened Bellona, then humbly ask permission to get off the earth. And when King Charles dispatches her with a message to some distant part of the field, it were worth ten years of peaceful life to witness her wind her lily-white fingers in the flowing mane of her livery-stable war-steed and go plunging, in erratic curves, across the *campus martius*, while the tail of her little dress-parade coat churns the circumambient ether. The Apostle will try to be present with his sketch-book when Rebecca first appears clad in all the glorious pomp and circumstance of war. Napoleon at the Bridge of Lodi, Alexander standing with folded arms amid the mighty ruins of a conquered world, or a pickaninny in his first pants, could not appear half so important, so inflated with the awful and unutterable.

A New York commercial dispatch states that "the circulating medium of this country has been contracted \$116,000,000 within a year." Every dollar withdrawn from circulation enhances the purchasing power of the remainder, thereby forcing down the nominal wage of labor and the price of products. This, by itself considered, is no great evil, for the reduction is merely nominal. We could transact the entire business of this country just as effectively with one million as with two millions of money. The trouble is that when commerce has once adopted a measure of value any radical alteration thereof—whether by contraction or expansion—has the same disastrous effect as would an unstable pound or a fluctuating yardstick. The common sense of the country is rapidly coming to the conclusion that we will never have an

immutable measure of value while we permit congress to juggle our currency, or base it on any commodity the production of which depends chiefly upon chance.

The fact that the parvenus are paying fancy prices for coats-of-arms and titled sons-in-law suggests that we might pay off the national debt by amending the constitution so as to permit the President to sell patents of nobility after the manner of mediæval princes. Our prosperous hog-morgue managers, soap-boilers and stock-brokers would give half their holdings to be ennobled—"stuck o'er with titles and hung 'round with strings." American heiresses should not be compelled to dump their boodle abroad in exchange for titled dudes and noble bums when we can manufacture an infinitely better article right here at home. With such a source of revenue it would be unnecessary to give bond syndicates soft snaps—our blessed gold reserve would grow like a pickaninny in 'possum time. By all means let us have a few Barons de Brewery and Earls de Oleomargarine, Laundry Soap Lords and Packing-house Princes. They would gladly bear all governmental burdens for the privilege of playing the fool.

Italy is again chewing the rag because another job lot of her homicidal subjects, who left home to escape hanging, have been hustled into the henceforth by our own Judge Lynch. The only way to avoid such complications is for Uncle Sam to compel every foreigner who attempts to take up a permanent residence here to promptly become an American citizen or fly across the ocean, birdie. Thousands of men who have resided here a quarter of a century—who have accumulated fortunes and families beneath our flag—still maintain their allegiance to foreign

potentates, are ever ready to appeal to them for protection. Not a few Englishmen, long resident here, send their pregnant wives abroad that their sons may be born British subjects instead of American sovereigns. Uncle Sam should give all such cattle just one month in which to either swear allegiance to Old Glory or get their un-American carcasses out of this country. A flag that is good enough to live under is good enough to fight for. And when an American takes up a permanent residence abroad—when he ceases to contribute to the support of this government and to be available for its defense—he should be given distinctly to understand that it is under no obligation to protect him.

An American Bimetallic Party is the latest political monstrosity, or economic moon calf, to come straddling upon the public stage. That such a party should be conceived evidences the chaotic condition into which the old political organizations have fallen. Neither the Democratic nor the Republican party is a unit on any economic theorem beneath high Heaven. They are altogether amorphous—absolutely “without form and void.” It were as impossible to foretell what kind of a platform one of these parties in convention will promulgate, or what it will do with it after using it as a wooden horse to get into Washington, as to anticipate the verdict of a petit jury by considering the law and listening to the evidence. In the Democratic party—which much resembles its political sister—we have high and low tariffites and free traders, gold-bugs, greenbackers and bimetallists, all huddled together like household goods and barnyard refuse in the wake of a Kansas cyclone. It is simply a disorganized mob of political odds-and-ends such as Peter the Hermit led into Palestine. The one-idea party is the

logical result of such a political condition. It is the only method by which an economic theory can be transformed into a full-blown condition—can escape compromises forced upon its advocates by contending factions professing the same political faith. As “saving the country” in a lump has proven a political failure, its salvation will now be attempted by segments.

* * *

DEATH OF DOUGLASS.

SENEGAMBIAINS AND SOCIAL EQUALITY.

MEMORIAL services in honor of Fred Douglass were held by the negroes in most Southern cities, and the utterances of the orators on these occasions deserve the serious consideration of all self-respecting Anglo-Saxons, illustrating as they do, the ideas and aspirations of our “colored fellow citizens.” That such speeches should be made and the orators not only go unrebuked, but be heartily commended by representative Southern dailies like the *Dallas News*, indicates that in a third of a century a wondrous change has come o'er both the Cavalier and the Coon.

I have no desire to disparage any man, of whatsoever race, who, by the power of his intellect has risen to prominence; but the fame of Fred Douglass is due to accident rather than to inherent ability. Measured by the Caucasian standard, he was not a remarkable man, but considered simply as a coon, he towered, like Saul, above his brethren. A dog may walk awkwardly enough on his hind legs; but it is truly wonderful that he should so walk at all. A negro may be far removed from the realm of genius; but that he should be gifted even with Anglo-Saxon common sense is really remarkable.

Fred Douglass was a mulatto—a mongrel bastard begotten by some depraved Caucasian of a colored drab. Conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, he inherited the intelligence of his degraded sire and the native impudence of his desiring dam. He took French leave of his master—whether because he longed for liberty or was too lazy to work, it were difficult to determine—became the protégé of Northern Abolitionists and, by systematic defamation of the Southern people, materially aided in bringing about that terrible sectional conflict which cost more blood and treasure than all the Ethiopians in the universe ever were worth. He was appointed to important offices by Republican Presidents as a sop to the Sene-gambian Cerberus, and finally gave the country an object lesson in social equality by marrying a white woman who had sunk low enough in the scale of human degradation to copulate with a coon.

At the Douglass memorial services held in Atlanta, the speakers clamored for social equality and the abolition of “Jim Crow cars,” defended miscegenation and eulogized John Brown, called upon the Lord to right their grievous “wrongs” and indorsed the declaration of Douglass that “The Southern people had better have a care or they would find firebrands in their houses and poison in their coffee.” They gloated over the fact—a damning disgrace to a grand old State—that the legislature of North Carolina adjourned “as a mark of respect to the dead statesman, placing in the order of its esteem, Douglass first, Washington second and Lee third!!”

The Dallas coons also “commemorated,” and their speeches were similar to the bombast of their Atlanta brethren. They insisted that Douglass was greater than Lincoln or Moses, hardly second to the Son of God, and

declared themselves "equal to any race or nationality upon the earth." His marriage to a white woman was referred to by one of the speakers, who promptly added that "Douglass had all the essentials of a great and wise leader and was worthy of imitation—" and the *Dallas News*, in its lengthy report of the disgraceful proceedings, was effusive in its praise, declaring the speeches to be "thorough, deep and studious!" The Atlanta *Journal* did muster up sufficient manhood to gently rebuke those nigger preachers who publicly approved of miscegenation; but our "representative Texas daily" applauded those speeches wherein the Ethiopian was declared to be the equal of the Anglo-Saxon and a mulatto miscegenationist the foremost American citizen! I do not know what others may think of this; but if I owned a dog degraded enough to utilize a copy of the *Dallas News* as a urinal I'd shoot him.

What do these things signify? Is the negro rapidly approaching the goal of his ambition—social equality with the white man? Are race distinctions to be swept completely aside here in the South, whites and blacks to occupy the same bed and board—to blend in a saddle colored aggregation of mangy mongrels, an olla-podrida of ethnological odds-and-ends thenceforth known as the American people? Twenty years ago had negroes dared give utterance in a Southern city to such sentiments as distinguished most of the Douglass memorial addresses they would have been rebuked with buckshot. Had a Southern newspaper set the seal of its approval upon such sentiments its office would have been wrecked by the indignant populace and its editors transformed into a bird by means of tar and feathers and taught to fly. Now such proceedings are accepted by the public without a protest. Progress is the shibboleth of the "New South";

but, unfortunately, progress and improvement are not always synonyms.

We have given the negro an inch and he proposes to take an ell. We have made him our political peer, and he aspires to become our social equal. We have voluntarily taxed ourselves to educate him and provide asylums for his deaf, and blind and lunatic; but that millennium for which he longs—when “Jim Crow cars” will be abolished and every black pulpитеer provided with a white wife—is not approaching so rapidly as he desires; hence he echoes the firebrand and poison threats of the impudent Douglass. And instead of lending a hand to lash him back into his proper place, the Southern press too often applauds his presumption. Whenever he becomes innoculated with the emigration itch, instead of encouraging his departure, it swings tearfully to his coat-tails, pleads with him to do us the honor to remain among us—assures him that nowhere else upon the earth will he be accorded so many privileges! Even the *Atlanta Journal*—one of the few papers that rebuked the rabid utterances of the memorial orators—assures Sambo that if he goes North he will be excluded from the professions and confined to menial services—that he is “treated better in the South than in the North”; which is but another way of saying that while the Cavalier will tolerate his presumption, the Puritan will not! “’Tis true, ’tis pity, and pity is ’tis true.”

The ante-bellum negro was a faithful and affectionate creature who recognized the superiority of the white race and accorded its representatives due reverence. The new crop of coons has been spoiled by the elective franchise and pauper education—by being pandered to by politicians seeking votes and shameless newspapers in quest of penny patronage. During the slavery régime criminal assaults upon white women by negroes were practically

unknown. When the Southern men were at the front, fighting the battles of the civil war, they left their wives and little ones on lonely plantations, surrounded by brawny negro bucks, with no more fear that the latter would molest them than that the dogs would do so. But when the negro was freed and the elective franchise forced upon him; when carpet-baggers and apostate newspapers had filled his foolish head with false ideas of his importance, criminal assaults upon white women followed as a natural sequence.

If, in thirty years after we were compelled to concede the negro political equality, Southern newspapers accord him column interviews on "The Race Problem" and applaud his aspirations to corrupt the Anglo-Saxon race with his simian blood; if, in so short a time, Southern gentlemen have become reconciled to sit in legislative assemblies with Senegambians—even vote to adjourn as a mark of respect to a miscegenationist whom they mention in the same breath with Washington and Lee—where will the next third of a century land us? The Old North State may have a nigger governor—or the President of the republic make some foul-smelling female "First Lady of the Land!"

In all seriousness, it is time to call these presumptuous coons to a halt. If only the more ignorant among them were imbued with the mischievous idea of social equality we might hope to educate it out of them; but it is the "smart coons"—the nigger preachers and young bucks who have taken a collegiate course at our expense—who are clamoring for their "rights," raving about firebrands and assiduously inflaming the minds of the masses. Our fathers were wiser than we when they declared it a crime to educate a coon. It were like tying firebrands to the tails of foxes and turning them loose in our wheat fields.

If we permit matters to drift as they are now doing we must either concede the Ethiopian all he asks or have a race war on our hands during the first decade of the coming century. The question before the Anglo-Saxon American is simply this: Shall we occasionally kill a presumptuous nigger preacher now, or destroy a million or more of their ignorant dupes a few years hence in defense of our homes?

* * *

THE HEROES OF HISTORY.

MANY of the martyrs whose memories we revere, of the saints we apotheosize, of the heroes we enshrine in history, were one-third fraud and two-thirds fake. The man who can grow in grace while his pet corn's in chancery, or lose an election without spraining his moral character; who can wait an hour for his dinner without walking all over the nerves of his wife, or crawl out of bed in the middle of his first nap and rustle till the cold, gray dawn with a brace of colicky kids, without broadly insinuating that he was a copper-riveted, nickel-plated, automatic, double-cylinder idiot ever to get married, is a greater hero than he that taketh a city.

The hero is not he that strives with the world for witness, who seeks the bubble fame at the cannon's brazen throat, and risks his life that he may live forever.

“ Think not that helm and harness are signs of valor
true;
Peace hath higher tests of manhood than battles ever
knew.”

To bear with becoming grace the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune; to find our heaven in others' happiness and for their sake to sacrifice, and suffer wrongs that might be righted with a thread of steel; to live an honest life in a land where Truth doth feed on crusts, while Falsehood fattens at lucullean feasts, requires more moral stamina, more true manliness than to follow a flag into the very jaws of hell, or die for the faith in the *auto da fé*.

Why unurn the ashes of the half-forgotten dead, and pore o'er the musty pages of the past for names to glorify? If you would find heroes grander, martyrs more noble and saints of more sanctity than a Rubens ever painted or immortal Homer sang; who, without Achilles' armor have slain a hundred Hectors, without Samsonian locks have torn the lion, without the sword of Michael have thrown down the gage to all the embattled hosts of Hell, seek not in the musty tomes of history, but in the hearts and homes of the self-sacrificing wives and mothers of this great world.

Let the heroes of history have their due; still I imagine the world will have been much the same had Alexander died of cholera infantum or grown up a harmless dude. I don't think the earth unbalanced would from its orbit fly had Cæsar been drowned in the Rubicon or Jim Corbett never been born. I imagine that Greece would have humbled the Persian's pride had there been no Thermopylæ, that Rome would have ruled the world had Scævola's good right hand not hissed in the Tuscan fire. One catfish does not make a creek, nor one hero a nation. The waves do not make the sea, but the sea furnishes forth the waves. Leonidas were lost to history but for the three hundred nameless braves who backed his bluff: had there been but

one Cromwell, Charles the First would have kept his head; in Washington's deathless splendor gleams the glory of forgotten millions, and the history of Bonaparte is written in the blood of the unknown brave.

* * *

CASTOR AND POLLUX.

“MEPHISTO is dead: God give him rest!” The speaker was a grizzled veteran who had fought with Grant at Shiloh and lain in the trenches about Vicksburg, waiting for Pemberton’s tardy surrender.

“Who was Mephisto?”

“He was captain of Company B, —th Illinois Volunteers, one of the noblest, manliest men that ever graced this mighty page of Time. At the outbreak of the war three brothers enlisted at Mattoon;—a dark-browed, melancholy man of five-and-thirty, and two lads not yet turned twenty. They were assigned to Company B, called ‘The Professors’ because composed chiefly of classical scholars. The elder of the brothers was a veritable Childe Harold,—moody, metaphysical, taciturn. Some shadow had fallen across his life, but what none knew, and the most inquisitive dared not ask. His was a majestic physique, a noble, manly face; but he avoided observation like a thief and across his brow was written blank despair. The sensitive lips were ever curled with the cynic’s sneer and the dark eyes blazed with dangerous fires. We called him Mephisto, and the name became him well. The younger brothers were twins, handsome as Greek gods, courageous as Cæsar, and sunny as a summer’s morn. They quickly became the pets of the regiment, its life and soul, and played their wild pranks, unrebuked, even

on the commanding officer. They stood in awe of but one thing in all the earth—their elder brother, who watched over them with more than a mother's tenderness and compelled more than a filial obedience. Their inseparable companionship, their golden curls, their beauty and their chivalry won for them the titles of Castor and Pollux—‘The Great Twin Brethren.’ They were excellent rameurs, possessed magnificent voices, and many a weary march and comfortless bivouac was made bearable by their wit and melody. Mephisto cared for naught on earth but his brothers. He was inordinately proud of their beauty, their accomplishments and their popularity. Many a time I have watched him, standing a little apart from the group gathered about the campfire to listen to their love songs, the firelight playing on his dark face, his soul in his eyes as he drank in with greedy ear their praises. If Castor or Pollux were detailed for any disagreeable or dangerous duty Mephisto managed to act as substitute. He hovered ever near them, alert but silent. At Donelson our captain was killed and Mephisto was promoted to the command. All feared and few loved him, but the very dog of the regiment would have closed its eyes and followed him into the gaping jaws of Hell. As the boys said, he ‘knew his business’ and would ‘fight a buzz saw,’ and ability and courage beget respect, even where they fail to win affection. During the first day at Shiloh, Castor and Pollux distinguished themselves for personal bravery and were ‘slated’ for promotion. The first smile we had seen on Mephisto’s Danteian face illumined it that night as he took his young brothers in his arms and congratulated them. ‘Beware of recklessness,’ he said as he held them off at arms’ length and looked at them, and then added, as though speaking to himself, ‘Only the unhappy can afford to challenge destiny!’

"On the second day of the battle as we were going into action, keeping step to

'We'll rally round the flag boys,
We'll rally once again,'

the thrilling tenor of the youths' ringing above the roar of the guns, an enfilading fire of grape and cannister caught the company, and Castor and Pollux went down before its blighting breath, mangled beyond recognition. The word went down the line like an electric shock and the company involuntarily halted. Mephisto sprang to them, his face white as the dead. A cry as of some wild animal in mortal agony burst from his ashen lips and he stood transfixed as though turned to stone. A moment thus, and then his voice rang out like a bugle call:

"Forward, Company B!"

"It was a veritable storm of lead and iron into which we plunged, and the men pulled their caps over their eyes and bent before it as though it were rain or hail. We were swallowed up in flame and smoke, but above the detonations of artillery and the roar of musketry that metallic voice continued to ring, 'Forward, Company B.'

"Of the eighty-three who went into battle twenty-two stacked arms that night. Mephisto was missing. We searched all next day among the dead and wounded but found him not. We had respected him before; we loved him now, because he loved the dead. The golden curls of 'The Great Twin Brethren' were close-clipped and divided among the members of the company, and torn bodies consigned to a single grave. 'Together they came into the world,' said the chaplain, 'together they left it, and together they will answer the trump of the resurrection.'

"A month later I was reconnoitering and in a dense

thicket came upon a man, unshaven and unshorn, wearing the tattered uniform of a Federal captain. He was sleeping, and beneath his head lay a well-kept Martini-Henry rifle, one of those deadly repeaters that made of war a massacre. There was something familiar about the worn face; the tears upon the bearded cheek contrasted strangely with the fiendish determination written upon lip and brow. A twig crackled beneath my feet, and quick as lightning the prostrate figure was erect, the rifle at my breast.

“‘Mephisto! What are you doing here?’

“‘I am avenging the death of my brothers,’ he replied doggedly. ‘Do you see these notches in my belt? Every one represents a cartridge used—and I never miss! No, I never miss!’

“‘But this is not war,’ I rejoined. ‘It is murder. Come back to your command.’

“‘Murder?’ he echoed, and there was a wild light in the yellow, tigerish eyes. ‘Murder? Well, so be it. My brothers are dead. I—I—’ He bit his nether lip until the blood spurted before he could continue. ‘I loved them,’ he added fiercely. ‘Do you know what that means?’

“Before I could frame a reply he disappeared in the thicket. Five minutes later I heard the crack of the Martini-Henry, and off to the left saw a young Confederate picket leap into the air, shot through the heart. Mephisto brushed past me, his face the incarnation of ferocity. I grasped him by the arm. ‘Madman!’ I cried: ‘Do you realize what you are doing?’

“He shook me off again, disappeared, muttering in his black beard: ‘I never miss.’

“I saw him no more during the war, but whenever I heard a rifle crack along the Confederate picket line I

thought of Mephisto and that grawsome belt upon which he kept the record of his assassinations."

"What became of him?"

The old veteran laughed uneasily. "Well, after the war he became a Campbellite preacher, and an exceptionally able one. The perturbed spirit at last found rest in the consolation of religion, and for more than a quarter of a century he was regarded as a ministering angel by the people of Central Kansas. I visited him for the first time last year, and could scarce realize that the saintly old gentleman, with his sympathetic voice and kindly, hopeful eyes, was really the demon who had glared at me in the southern thicket and boasted of his brutal homicides. As I was preparing to come away I took from my purse two locks of golden hair, clotted with blood, and laid them in his hand without a word. It was a fatal blunder. His fingers closed upon them convulsively, the old tigerish gleam came back to his eyes and a spasm of unspeakable pain, strangely mingled with love and hate, swept across the aged face. Again he was standing on Shiloh's bloody field, looking into the faces of his dead; again that cry of agony rose to his lips; again the fierce command rang out, 'Forward, Company B,' and the soul of Mephisto had gone to join his brethren."

The dispatches state that some thirty members of the legislature utilize the committee-rooms of the capitol as bedchambers in violation of the laws made and provided. An "investigation" has been frequently threatened, but up to the present writing has failed to materialize. We trust that it will continue to be side-tracked, for we should dislike to see the calcium turned upon the gilded perch of these lowly patriots to whom "retrenchment" is no idle platform pledge, "economy" no empty sound.

As there is an abundance of room in the building, and many members are striving desperately to save enough out of their \$2 per diem and stamp allowance to keep them out of the cotton-patch next summer, there should be no objection urged to their bringing their patch-work quilts and moss pillows and camping in the committee-rooms. Nay, Acapulco Mobley should even grant them permission to make coffee and broil bacon in the capitol grounds. If, with these concessions they cannot save their country and some cash, there is no law to prevent them slipping out after morning sessions and sawing a little wood or doing other odd jobs for the prosperous citizens of Dam-town.

* * *

HONESTY VS. LAW.

MANY men are "legally honest" who are morally rotten—conform to the statutes simply to keep out of prison. Legal honesty is the brand usually proclaimed as "The best policy." Only fools risk the penitentiary to fill their purse; the smart rascal is ever honest within the law—infamous in strict accord with the criminal code. The man once declared a bankrupt may become a multi-millionaire, see people he settled with at 15 cents on the dollar die in the poorhouse, decline to pay them their just dues, and still be legally honest; but if you lend him a chew o' tobacco you had best take a receipt for it.

Dives may attire himself in purple and fine linen and fare sumptuously every day, while Lazarus lies at his door for the dogs to lick, vainly craving the crumbs that fall from his table, and still be well within the law—even a church member in good standing; but his loyalty to legal

forms will avail him but little when he finds his shirt-tail afire and no water within forty miles.

The girl who flirts with a featherless young gosling until he doesn't know whether he's floating in a sea of champagne to the sound of celestial music, sliding down a greased rainbow, or riding on the ridge-pole of the Aurora Borealis, then tells him she can only be a Christmas-present-opera-ticket sister to him; who steals his unripe affections and allows 'em to get frost-bitten—carries him into the empyrean of puppy love only to drop him with a dull plunk that fills his callow heart with compound fractures—well, she cannot be prosecuted for petty larceny nor indicted for malicious mischief; but the unfortunate fellow who finally gets her will be glad to go to Heaven, where there's neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

The man who preaches prohibition in public and pays court to a gallon jug of corn-juice in private; who damns the saloon at home and sits up with it all night abroad, may not transcend the law of the land; but if the Lord wants him the Devil will discount his claim.

The man who sues a fellow citizen for "alienating his wife's affections," instead of striking his trail with a bell-mouthed blunderbuss and a muzzle-loading bulldog; who asks the court to put a silver lining in the cloud of infamy that hangs over his home—tries to make capital of his shame and heal with golden guineas the hurt that honor feels—even he may be a "law-abiding citizen," but ten thousand such souls might play hide-and-seek on the surface of a copper cent for a hundred years and never find each other.

The little tin-horn attorney, whose specialties are divorce and libel suits; who's ever striving to stir up good-for-naughts to sue publishers of newspapers for \$10,000 damages to 10-cent reputations; who's as ready to shield Vice from the sword of Justice as to defend Virtue from stupid Violence; who is ever for sale to the highest bidder—keeps tears on tap for whosoever will drop a dollar in the slot; will weep over the woes of the red-handed homicide or bewail the gaping wounds of his victim; will take a contingent fee to bleed his best friend, or enter into conspiracy to despoil honest industry by due process of law; will rob the orphan of his patrimony on a legal technicality and brand the Virgin Mary as a bawd to shield a blackmailer—well, he can't be put in the penitentiary, more's the pity! but it's some satisfaction to believe that if, in all the great universe of God there is a Hell where fiends lie howling, the most sulphurous section is reserved for the infamous shyster, the carrion crow of human kind—that if he cannot be debarred from the courts of earth he'll get the bounce from those of Heaven.



* * *

SALMAGUNDI.

THE *Tammany Times*, New York, is rapidly acquiring a national reputation as a political journal. Col. Fred Feigl, long connected with the Texas press, is the master spirit of the *Times*, and is proving himself a pace-setter in metropolitan journalism.

Love is just like all other sweet things: Unless you get the very best brand it sours awful easy.



In Texas high silk hats are now confined chiefly to corn-doctors, cads and coons.

Too many young ladies rush into literature instead of the laundry—become poets of passion instead of authors of pie.

King Cotton is becoming almost as worthless as the rest of the world's royalty.

If Sappho resembled her modern portraits, it was probably an aching face instead of a bleeding heart that caused her suicide.

A political economist is a man who tries to save the country by the science of definition.

The barber who will learn to breathe through his ears need never want for a job.

If the world could trade its "reformers" for philanthropists at a 16-to-1 ratio it would be ahead of the game.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand," would be an appropriate inscription for the tombstone of the fallen Democracy.

A married woman was never yet "led astray" who failed to furnish the string.

A mugwump is a man who insists on putting new wine in old bottles.

It is not until a young man suspects he knows more than his father that he begins to doubt the religion of his mother.

Every woman possessing a pretty ankle is heartily in favor of "dress reform."

The man hanged for homicide usually repents and is jerked to Jesus, while his victim, cut off in the heyday of his sins, is supposed to go to hell a-whooping.

No well authenticated he-virgin has ever succeeded in setting the world afire.

God made man, and finding that he couldn't take care of himself, made woman to take care of him—and she proposes to discharge her Heaven-appointed duty or know the reason why.

Too many people mistake the pangs of a bad digestion for the barbed arrows from the Love god's bow.

* * *

BACHELORS VS. BENEDICTS.

HON. JEFFERSON MCLEMORE, the blond Apollo from the sunny shores of the beautiful Cerpus Bay, has presented a bill in the legislature which proposes to levy a tax on bachelors as a sharp reminder that they should become benedicts and assist in the upbuilding of the State by adding thereto an occasional olive branch. The bill may possess some merit, despite the fact that it ignores both the Malthusian theory of population and John Ireland's

view of immigration; but we insist that it be materially amended before becoming a law of the land.

Mr. McLemore too evidently takes it for granted that because an increase of population is the great desideratum in Southwest Texas it is so everywhere—that because he has to hide in the chaparral every leap year to avoid being rounded up by the matrimonial noose, every man who remains a bachelor does so of his own election. In his eagerness to serve those ladies whom he imagines to be looking and longing for husbands to love during the honeymoon, honor sometimes and obey occasionally, he quite overlooks the fact that the school-tax is already fixed at the maximum and still unequal to the emergency. As a statesman and a Democrat it is clearly Mr. McLemore's duty to consider what would become of us if, to avoid this onerous tax, all the bachelors in Texas should trail blithely in the wake of Hymen's torch and begin to build up families with that enthusiasm characteristic of new converts. Evidently we'd either have to make another Jesterian raid on the permanent school fund or see the next generation transfer the State to the Populists.

It is entirely safe to assume that ninety-and-nine men out of every hundred who have attained to the mature age of thirty years have offered their hands, hearts and all appurtenances thereunto belonging, to enchanting representatives of the gentler sex. As a rule such suits are successful, and orange blossoms and millinery bills, paregoric and repentance follow in their regular sequence; but occasionally the woman in the case, while willing to be wooed, declines to be won—leaves the sighing swain stranded on the bleak and barren rocks of bachelorhood in company with a blighted life and the mournful fragments of a broken heart. Would Mr. McLemore lay an excise on unavailing regret, or put a toll-gate on the

Bridge of Sighs? Shall we proceed on the theory that in matrimony—as in office-seeking—man should take for his motto, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again?” And suppose that he does keep on trying until he finds himself drifting into the sear and yellow leaf in company with a case of hope deferred, calloused knees and a string of “sisters” as long as the preamble to a legislative resolution of respect? It is said that there are as many women as men in the world, therefore a wife for everyone; but it is well to remember that

“When a woman will she will you may depend on’t,
And when she won’t she won’t, and there’s an end on’t.”

Clearly if we are to fine men for remaining bachelors we should make it possible for them to get out of that awful predicament. The necessary correlative of the law proposed by Mr. McLemore is one making it a penal offense for a woman to become an old maid of her own accord. Of course, it were cruelty to compel her to accept the first bipedal, breeches-wearing animal that offered; but we could compromise the matter by according her a certain number of challenges, as we do the accused in criminal cases.

We opine that if Mr. McLemore really desires to serve the ladies, he is beginning wrong. Instead of amending the statutory law he should bend all his energies to a radical revision of the social code. Instead of driving poor, heartsore bachelors back to meet with another rebuff, let him give the ladies permission to go after their game. If he will but put a hundred leap years in every century; if he will give woman the right to do half the courting—to select a man to her liking and capture him if she can—the bachelors will simply have to become benedicts or take

to the brush, and there will soon be no old maids outside of the dime museums.

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THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

THE so-called Monroe Doctrine has kept Uncle Sam in hot water for three-quarters of a century and bids fair to embroil him in one of the bloodiest wars known to the world's history if he persists in exploiting it. In 1823, when it was suspected that the Holy Alliance would attempt to re-establish Spain's dominion over her revolted colonies, President Monroe, in a message to Congress, enunciated the "doctrine" that bears his name, but which doubtless emanated from that eminent jingoist, John Quincy Adams, then Secretary of State. Monroe declared that the American continents "are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power," and particularly warned the respective members of the Holy Alliance that "we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of the western hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." Then, to make his meaning so plain that none might mistake it, he added, referring to the cisatlantic governments then struggling for life, that "we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."

If that means anything whatsoever it means that the United States has established a quasi-protectorate over the smaller American governments, so far as Europe is

concerned—that Uncle Sam is the self-constituted bouncer of the western hemisphere and proposes to serve without salary. Several Texas dailies have consumed considerable editorial space trying to give it a different construction; but unless we agree with Talleyrand that “language was made to conceal thought,” we must concede that the Monroe pronunciamento means exactly what it says. Jefferson was consulted on the subject by the Monroe Administration before the delivery of the message and he declared, after referring to the importance of the question, that “we should never suffer Europe to intermeddle with cisatlantic affairs.” Webster, who certainly understood the English tongue, gave it this interpretation and his hearty indorsement so far as those countries bordering on the Mexican gulf are concerned. It is urged by certain political sophists that, even conceding the message to have meant all it said, and to constitute our policy to-day, it does not follow that we would take up arms to enforce it. To assume that Uncle Sam would solemnly warn European governments to keep off the cisatlantic grass, then fail to back his bluff with powder and ball; that he would suffer his “peace and safety” to be endangered without writing his protests in blood if need be, were to brand him a cowardly bully.

The Monroe Doctrine declares in diplomatic but unequivocal language that if Europe monkeys with any portion of the western hemisphere which has set up political housekeeping for itself, she will run afoul of the American eagle, and there’ll be, as Sam Jones would say in his æsthetic pulpit vernacular, “blood and hair and the ground tore up.” It assumes our right to inquire into such controversies as that of England vs. Venezuela, and to interfere, if need be, to prevent “oppression” by the transatlantic Power, or any tampering with the “destiny”

of the little Republic. Such is the common-sense construction of the Monroe Doctrine by the world's diplomats; so it has been understood for two-and-seventy years by the people of every American government.

The Monroe Doctrine, like a defunct feline in the family cistern, cannot be explained away; it must be removed. It is illogical, useless, productive of nothing but international ill-will. A protectorate implies responsibilities. If we will not permit European Powers to forcibly collect their dues of our neighbors or chastise their insolence, we become morally bound for their debts and responsible for their behavior. The Monroe Doctrine not only denies to Spain the right to reconquer Mexico, but would prevent the latter again becoming a Spanish province by the expressed will of her people, hence it is the tool of tyranny as well as the ægis of Liberty.

What can this country hope to gain by playing continental policeman at its own expense? Monroe declares that we must consider the extension of European authority "to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." But that was seventy-two years ago, when Uncle Sam was in his swaddling clothes and, quite naturally, much concerned about the character of his neighbors. But time has amply demonstrated the uselessness of Monroe's anxiety. England owns everything to the north and other European Powers once controlled everything to the south and west of us, including a large tract of our present territory, yet the bird o' freedom never moulted a feather. If John Bull should put all South America into his capacious political pocket it would in nowise endanger the "peace and safety" of Uncle Sam. The Briton could not turn the wild beasts and reptiles of that practically unpopulated region loose upon us as he did the redskins during the Revolution. In

case of war such possession would weaken him, and he would be unable to hold it after it became worth the having. As soon as the American colonies quit calling on him for troops to defend their frontier they arose and smote him in the umbilicus, and we have to close the door to keep Canada from coming into the Union—and bringing her sky-scraping Dominion debt with her. Spain lost Mexico and her South American possessions and is having a hades of a time holding Cuba. Brazil slipped through the fingers of Portugal like a greased pig, France has practically faded from the map of the New World, and even the kindly offices of Grover Cleveland could not keep monarchy alive in the mid-Pacific.

Really we need not worry about any seed the European monarchies may sow in American soil: The climate is not adapted to that kind of a political crop. About the time it gets a good start and promises to make a bale to the acre a revolutionary cyclone rips it up by the roots. It is not necessary that this government—the most powerful on the globe—should “view with alarm” every European footprint in the western world, nor is it under any obligation to afford protection at its own expense to *opéra bouffe* Republics. About the first thing a Spanish American government does after donning its initial diaper, is to flagrantly insult the American flag. Uncle Sam had serious trouble with Mexico, and the heteroscian pismires are continually crawling up the old man’s pants. There is not a country between our southern boundary and the Antarctic circle in which an American citizen is safe from official insult; yet whenever a European Power proposes to hold one of these single-shovel “Republics” up by the ear and pound the impudence out of it, it turns to us for protection. They are Republics *de jure* but despotisms *de facto*, and the cause of Liberty would suffer no loss if

they were all made subject to the Russian czar. Madame Roland truly said that many crimes are committed in the name of Liberty, but even she never dreamed of aught so damnable as the wholesale sacrifice of Anglo-Saxons at the foolish shrine of a mongrel despotism masquerading in the robe of Freedom. Uncle Sam has been starring in the ridiculous rôle of Don Quixote quite long enough, and should now give the Spanish *caballeros* and half-civilized Aborigines to the south of us to distinctly understand that they must work out their own salvation; that he desires "Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none."

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THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER.

THE locomotive engineer is to the village-bred boy of to-day what the stage-driver was to the youth of his grand-sire. The brakeman who can ride all day on top of a box car, and the passenger-train conductor, with his gaudy cap and Mardi Gras lantern, pale into insignificance beside the man who manages the iron horse. Machinery possesses a weird fascination for the American youth, and the locomotive is to all other mechanism what a shotgun is to a "nigger-shooter." It adds to its attractions the romance of travel—is to the boys of the interior what a ship is to those reared within the sound of the sea.

At the age of ten I was so infatuated with locomotives that to get possession of one I stole an entire freight train. It was standing on the main track in my native village, the crew had abandoned it to investigate a big watermelon which the station agent had opened, and I improved the opportunity to penetrate the mysteries of the engineer's cab. I had no intention of meddling with the

iron monster, but when I got my hand on the lever the temptation to set the big drivers in motion was too strong to be resisted. The train started so easily that it did not attract the attention of the hilarious crew in the freight-house until it went roaring across Flat Branch bridge and on towards Mattoon at a good round gait. I decided that I might as well be hanged for an old sheep as a lamb, and pulled the throttle open a little wider, whistling and ringing the bell for all the crossings and pretty much everything else in sight. A mule got on the track in front of me, and I was so fearful he would escape that I gave the lever another lusty pull. The train fairly bounded forward and the telegraph poles seemed thick as fence posts. I got the mule—spread him all over the smoke-stack. By this time I had the lever down among the tallow pots—was making the highest speed the machine was capable of. The great iron monster swayed and groaned, the cars seemed bowing to both sides of the right-o'-way, and I was delirious with joy. Mattoon was in sight, and I determined to go through the town like a whirlwind, on to Cairo and take a look at the two big rivers. I was leaning out of the cab window trying to make out the figures on the mile-posts when I was suddenly pulled by the ear. Instead of joining the water-melon debauch the conductor had lain down in the caboose and gone to sleep. When the "dog house" began to dance on one wheel he awoke and realized that there was something wrong. He crawled over the boxes at the imminent risk of his life to expostulate with the engineer. While he was bringing the train to a standstill I debated whether I should run away or go back home and take the worst licking of my life. The conductor solved the problem for me; I went back. I have a very vivid recollection of the events immediately subsequent thereto, but as they

could not possibly possess that absorbing interest for the general public that they did for me I will let them pass.

The locomotive engineers constitute a peculiar class that is neither understood nor appreciated by the general public. Sober, silent, alert, with the time-table for their Bible and the train dispatcher's written orders for their creed, they discharge their dangerous duty. If a soldier loses his little finger in the service of his country he is voted a hero and given a pension. When a locomotive engineer deliberately goes to his death to protect the lives of others and the property committed to his care, his reward is a few lines in the daily press. Such occurrences are too common to excite comment.

If all the dangers of the rail were as patent to the public as to the man at the throttle there would be precious little traveling for "pleasure." The public hears only of the accidents that occur, not of the thousands averted by the cool judgment and leonine courage of the man in the cab. Mounted upon his iron steed, with its heart of fire and breath of flame, he goes rushing through the midnight storm at the rate of 50 miles an hour, dragging in his wake a heavy train filled with precious human freight. He may know that the speed is too rapid for either the track or rolling stock, but the time-table calls for it and it must come. Perhaps around the next curve he will find a culvert washed out or the track obstructed by a cave-in. The rails may spread out at any moment, or the next switch be misplaced. Sleepy dispatchers sometimes blunder and a collision may occur; but he can only keep his eye on the slippery track, his hand on the lever, and go plunging on. If an accident occurs those in the coaches must escape with only a shaking up, regardless of what happens to him. He must stand at his post like a Roman sentinel though the heavens rain fire.

To the man at the throttle his engine is no dull, dead piece of mechanism, but a living, sentient creature, to be praised when it does well and rebuked when it does ill. It responds to his touch like a well-trained steed and he becomes devotedly attached to it—talks to it as a good jockey does to his horse.

It is the end of a long night run with a heavy train, on a sinuous, ill-constructed track—a veritable serpent of rust resting upon rotten ties. The engineer has scarce spoken a word except to quote a little sacred blank verse when the new brakeman, who had turned a switch to let him on a siding, turned it back to let him out. Even his orders to the fireman are given by a motion of the hand. But as we strike the stiff home grade his demeanor changes. He uncurls from his bench and looks back at the train, then surveys his engine as though measuring its strength.

“Now, old girl, you’ve got to hustle for it. Pull yourself together and sand your feet. Here, here! no skirt-dancing, madam! This is no John Bell joint. Steady, old girl—steady!”

The great machine plunges at the grade and struggles like a living creature, the sharp puffs wakening the echoes far and wide amid the somber pines, upon whose tall tops rests the morning mist, reddened by the rising sun. The engineer coaxes, as a driver might a willing horse, and the machine, which seems to understand him, responds with greater exertions, but the heavy loads roll slower and slower, the drivers slip despite the sand, emitting a million metallic sparks—the “old girl” is stalled. A short, sharp whistle, that sounds like the shriek of some sentient animal for aid, the three rear brakes are hard set, and up on this buttress the train rolls slowly back. The engineer is preparing to “take the slack.” His engine is no longer

"old girl" and "sweetheart," but the most disreputable drab that ever inhabited Happy Hollow—or got listed in the blue book of New York's Four Hundred. Locomotive engineers are not much addicted to gab—they are nothing if not epigrammatic—and when they speak are liable to say something. The engine stands for a minute as though heartily ashamed of itself, panting like a brown roadster, then springs forward with a bound. The cars follow, each in its turn, with a rattling jerk that tests the drawheads, until the last are reached, when the brakes are quickly released, and "madam," having retrieved her moral character, goes puffing proudly into port.

A year later I sat by the bedside of the same engineer while he breathed his life away—crushed and scalded at the post of duty. Again he was out on his "run," striving desperately to make time with a heavy train.

"The last grade, my girl; climb that and we're home. Molly's waiting and so are the kids, to see you come round the curve. What! Can't keep your feet? You must do better than that or we'll never get in. How dark it is! Tom, did you douse that glim? I can't see the rails! There's the station light—now we roll—now—we—" and he had climbed the "last grade."

No one troubled with what is sometimes called "nerves" has the least business with a locomotive. To manage one and at the same time enjoy good health requires not only superior courage, but a stoicism worthy of a Sioux warrior. The locomotive engineers shoulder graver responsibilities and face more dangers than almost any other class of men that could be mentioned. And this for a salary that would not satisfy a competent bookkeeper.

One night, while northbound with the Fast Mail, we received orders to look out for a brakeman who was supposed to have fallen from a southbound freight.

"Who is it?" asked the engineer.

"Damfino," replied the pert young operator. "Think it's the Scotchman they call Sandy. What's the matter, old man? Seen a ghost?" But the engineer climbed into the cab without a word. There was something in his throat that would not permit of words.

"You d—d fool, Sandy's his son," said the conductor as he gave the signal to go ahead. I offered to handle the engine, but he only shook his head.

We are an hour late and are expected to move as fast as "66" can turn a wheel. A heavy fog is hugging the earth and at a hundred yards the headlight resembles a splotch of luminous vapor—a tallow dip whose flame had liquefied. We tear through the fog like a thunderbolt rending the clouds, the buildings gliding by like ghosts, the engineer's eyes fixed steadily upon the dripping rails that come rushing out of the gloom. He knows to an inch what space he can stop, to a foot how far he can see into the fog. Sandy is safe so far as "66" is concerned. Ten miles, twenty, thirty, and still no sign of the missing man, and I can see the father is beginning to hope that it is a false alarm; but suddenly a prostrate figure, lying right across the rails, comes rushing into view, so near that an involuntary cry bursts from the lips of the fireman and he averts his face. Quick as the lightning's flash the engine is reversed and the air applied—but the latter will not work! The engineer shrieks for the hand brakes, but it is too late. The reversed drivers churn the rails to a red heat, but the terrible momentum of the heavy train cannot be overcome. Sandy waves his hand to us, he half rises, his white face showing ghastly beneath the headlight's glare. The siren dashes through the cab window as though to snatch the son from the very jaws of death, but ere he can reach the pilot it strikes the upturned face.'

and we feel the jar of the engine and hear the hiss of blood on the fire-box as he is ground beneath the wheels.

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INCOME TAX DECISION.

THE Supreme Court of the United States has taken a whirl at the income tax law and left it looking like a picnic suit after a shower. The bigwigs agreed to disagree on pretty nearly every point in controversy, deciding only two, and these in utter disregard of the laws of logic and the dictates of common sense. Chief Justice Fuller gravely declares that incomes derived from state, county and municipal bonds (amounting to \$65,000,000 per annum) "are not proper subjects for the taxing powers of Congress." If not, why not? The federal government is supported by revenues drawn from the people who constitute the various local governments, and upon whom Congress is empowered by the constitution to levy a direct tax. Any property is depreciated in value by the amount of tax laid upon it. Then wherein is it more objectionable for Congress to depreciate the value of Texas bonds than the value of the property pledged for their redemption? The difference would seem to consist in the fact that state, county and municipal securities yielding a revenue of \$65,000,000 per annum have passed into the hands of the monied aristocracy who must be protected, while the property from which so much interest is yearly wrung is largely in the possession of the masses—who are "proper subjects for the taxing power of Congress." If I own a little home in Waco I am taxed to pay interest on bonds issued by state, county and municipality, and may be mulcted for the support of the federal government; but the millionaire into whose

plethoric purse the interest goes must not be troubled by Uncle Sam's tax collectors. So says the court. The income of A, derived from cultivating cotton or planting hogs, is a "proper subject for the taxing power of Congress," while the income of B, derived from state, county or municipal six per cents., is not! Had the law been upheld, buyers of future bond issues would unquestionably shift the tax upon the people emitting them; but to urge their exemption on that account were a plea for the exemption of merchants and manufacturers, telegraph companies and common carriers. Had the law been upheld the tax upon that \$65,000,000 per annum now derived from state, county and municipal bonds, and amounting to more than \$1,300,000, would have been borne exclusively by the holders—would have constituted a true income tax as intended by Congress, because it could not have been shifted to other shoulders. The best clause in the entire law—granting the wisdom of an income tax—has been knocked out, not because it was unconstitutional, (for the Chief Justice did not so declare it), but because it displeased the court, which appears to have made the plutocrat its especial protégé. The second point decided by the court was that a tax on incomes derived from land was equivalent to a direct tax upon the land itself, therefore, inadmissible unless apportioned as provided by the Constitution. If this be sound logic, then the Supreme Court has stricken out the enacting clause of the law in question; it is dead from nozzle to narrative, and we might just as well call off the collectors. With this utterance of Chief Justice Fuller for premise, the conclusion must inevitably follow that a tax on income derived from any class of property whatsoever is equivalent to a direct tax, therefore, unless apportioned, unconstitutional and void. It were clearly absurd

to say that a tax on income derived from land is "direct," while that on incomes derived from buildings, mines, cattle, newspapers, professions, etc., is "indirect." That kind of hair-splitting would disgrace a forks-of-the-creek economist or professional shyster. If a tax on rent is a direct tax, what the devil is a tax on salary—the reward of individual effort? "What," asks Chief Justice Fuller, "is the land but the profit on it?" And what, we ask, is any class of property, profession or occupation but "the profit on it"? The idea of the framers of the income tax law was to compel every man to contribute to the support of government according to his abilities rather than his necessities; but the Supreme Court has practically declared that "Unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

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SANCTIFICATION AND THE SWORD.

ANOTHER "TEA PARTY" PENDING.

ONE of the leaders of the crusade for disestablishment in Wales writes the ICONOCLAST from Manchester, England, as follows:

"I hope to see the complete separation of Church and State throughout the civilized world. I am a churchman, but the Church and State should be kept as far apart as possible. America is my ideal. There the government of man and the government of God are separate and distinct, the one compulsory, the other entirely a matter of conscience."

I much fear that my English friend is not a close student of American institutions or he would look elsewhere for

his "ideal." He has yet to learn that even here—in this boasted land of liberty—"the government of man and the government of God" are still starring as Siamese twins and that the latter is no less compulsory than its companion. He has evidently not heard that the American citizen, whether he be Jew or Gentile, Christian or Atheist, is compelled to cough up an extra sum to the tax collector in order that hundreds of millions of dollars worth of church property may escape the government mulct and legislative bodies be provided with matin prayers—paid for at the rate of \$5 a minute from the public purse. He has probably never seen a great American State selling a widow's home or auctioning off her cow to satisfy a tax assessment, while the bells of a costly church in the same block pealed merrily, as though praising God that it had a "pull" on the government. Nor has he carefully examined the Sunday laws here in force or he would not assert that with us "the government of God is entirely a matter of conscience." Uncle Sam has evidently deceived our correspondent—and has well nigh humbugged himself—with his foolish boasts of "religious liberty," "freedom of conscience," etc. Our States are practically theocracies, our legislatures ecumenical councils by which those religious dogmas entertained by the majority are declared the law of the land and enforced by judicial process, the *posse comitatus* and the entire military force at the command of the government. We might at least expect that beneath the Lone Star, that especial child of liberty, the State would eschew the sacerdotal character and confine itself strictly to secular matters; yet our legislatures are fully persuaded that they are in duty bound to guard both the spiritual and temporal welfare of the citizen—that they have been duly ordained to administer the government of both man and God. Texas

plumes herself on being “the banner democratic State,” has much to say anent personal liberty and local self-government and never tires of pointing the finger of scorn at sumptuary laws; yet her statutes make it a misdemeanor punishable by fine—which the offender must lay out in prison if he cannot pay—to labor, sell goods, or open a place of amusement in any section of the State, regardless of the religious predilections of the people. Here we have a conservation of the spirit of the Spanish Inquisition showing itself as boldly as it dares, the fag-end of that early New England fanaticism and tongue-boring cropping out where a big democratic majority is swinging its sombrero and cracking its lungs howling for personal liberty!

Think of throwing an American citizen into jail in this, the last decade of the nineteenth century, for shaving a “sovereign” or selling a cigar on Sunday; for an offense, not against his fellow man, but against that great God who created the heavens and the earth and incidentally “made the stars also”—threw them in as lagniappe! Yes, think of it; then contemplate a people boasting their independence and posing as the very apotheosis of progress, tamely submitting to such a flagrant infringement of their divine rights and constitutional prerogatives!

But “the old order changeth, yielding place to new.” Our English correspondent has probably heard that it changed in 1776. At this time there was in Great Britain a fat-headed fellow who played the divine racket on the American people much as the priests and preachers are doing to-day. He assumed that he had been divinely ordained to decide what was best for them—that they were in duty bound to obey, pay taxes and look pleasant. They took his presumption in good part for a great many

years, but when he got to rubbing it in they grew restless and began to file protests—much as they are doing now, and with the same unsatisfactory results. At that time to question the prerogative of princes to do as they pleased with the common people was regarded as almost as great a sin as “ Sabbath desecration ” is to-day, and as King George was in the majority he simply sneered at the recalcitrants, rubbed a little more holy oil on his divine right and went ahead with his hog-killing. Finally the famous tea party, which had been so long brewing, was held in Boston harbor and for eight long years there was hell to pay and a distressing stringency in the money market. Another tea party is rapidly getting ripe, and when it is over and the cups and saucers returned to the cupboard there’ll be no “ blue laws ” in Uncle Sam’s bailiwick, costly churches will be taxed just the same as the poor man’s cottage, and legislators who desire to indulge in the luxury of \$5-a-minute Protestant prayers will not rob Catholic, infidel and Jewish pantries to pay the sacred wind-jammer, but go down into their own jeans for the price of saving grace.

We could stand taxation for church purposes without representation in the amen corner if our sanctified brethren would refrain from adding injuries that benefit nobody, then presenting us with choice specimens of unprovoked insolence simply to reduce their superabundant stock; but when a man cheerfully puts up his pro-rata for perfunctory prayers and the exemption of church property from all taxation, then finds himself persistently boycotted both in politics and business by the people he has befriended, denounced from the pulpit as an emissary of the devil by flannel-mouthed preachers who are indirectly fattening upon his substance, and rendered an abject slave one-seventh of his life by the laws of his native land simply

because an emperor who died 1,500 years ago was an unmitigated ass, he feels like exchanging his stock of Christian charity for a stuffed club and asserting his rights as a free-born American citizen.

Nearly nineteen centuries ago Christ informed the Pharisees that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," but that extensive sect of sacred mummers still cling tenaciously to the interdicted dogma. They declare it criminal to do on Sunday what is eminently proper on other days, and, being in a majority, they enact an iron-clad law compelling Jew and Gentile to conform to their theological faith. And what excuse have they to offer for this insolent interference with individual liberty, the abrogation of that "freedom of conscience" guaranteed us by the Conscript Fathers? Sam Jones sums it up when he says: "The citizen has no right to do wrong." True, oh reverend blatherskite; but who authorized you to decide for the American citizen what is right and wrong, theologically considered? Produce your credentials, Sir Garrulity, or come off the grass. Another lippy member of the black army—Talmage, I believe—has told us that "the majority has a right to say how the Sabbath shall be observed." Indeed? Then it also has a right to say what day shall be accepted as the Sabbath by the entire people; hence it follows that if the Jews and Seventh Day Adventists should eventually find themselves in the majority they would be privileged to make Saturday the legal Sabbath and compel its rigid observance as such by all other sects. The consistent Christian could then harvest his hoop-poles or dig fishbait on the first day of the week "in the fear of the Lord." Having issued his *ipse dixit*, we invite Brother Talmage to loaf around it and see how he likes it. This being the country of majority rule in religion as well as in matters

mundane, it follows that what is sauce for the Christian goose is sauce for the Hebrew gander.

Good soul, who made thee thy brother's keeper? Where in the constitution of your country or the teachings of your Saviour do you learn it to be your duty to lay violent hands upon a worldling and drag him, squirming and kicking—perhaps cursing—to the Throne of Grace? Produce your authority for employing the jails of this country to propagate the Christian religion—for cramming its forms and symbols down the throat of thy fellow man with a policeman's bludgeon. What is it to thee if I till my field, sell my goods or list to some aspiring Roscius spout Euripides on Sunday? Does it compel thee to do likewise? Does it interfere with your freedom or abridge your prerogatives, endanger your health or cost you a copper? Will the blessed Saviour compel you to answer for my sins and send you to hades as a "vicarious atonement" while I roost on some roseate cloud in company with a halo and a harp and attended by a choice assortment of she-angels! No? Then please to forbear further interference with my affairs. If I feel the need of your assistance to reach the Throne of Grace I'll so inform you. I may prefer to deal with the Almighty direct and without the officious intervention of a middleman—to map out my own path to the heavenly hereafter without the assistance of a theological surveyor. Your religion is really bile instead of benevolence. Instead of a crown you need a cathartic. You have mistaken an abnormal itch for meddling for the promptings of the Holy Spirit. You prattle about the "desecration of the Sabbath" when the very niggers know that Christ had no more to do with its establishment than Moses with making the Fourth of July an American holiday—that it was not sanctioned by the Father, the Son or any of

the original Saints. You would, if clothed with plenary power, compel every son of Adam to accept your narrow-gauge creed and worship God according to the dictates of your so-called conscience instead of his own. You have altogether mistaken the spirit and ignored the letter of that message which Christ brought to mankind. It was a message of Love and Liberty, while you are the Apostle of Slavery, the apotheosis of Persecution.

“Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” saith the Lord. “Jog along to your Jesus or go to jail,” says the State. When encompassed by His enemies in the Garden of Gethsemane Christ rebuked that follower who employed force in His defense.

“Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.”

Yet His so-called followers here in Texas rely upon the sword, not to protect their dear Lord from ignominious death, but to prevent some impecunious publican wrecking the New Jerusalem and throwing Omnipotent God into a fit of sulks by selling a popcorn ball on Sunday. They assume that every utterance of the Saviour was a divine truth which must, perforce, be fulfilled to the very letter, yet persist in playing with edge-tools.

That religion which must rely upon secular law is inherently rotten. That religion which appeals to brute force to secure respect is not of God but of the Devil, therefore, not worthy of the devotion of a yaller dog.

“But Sunday laws are necessary as a police regulation,” I am told. Indeed? Is there aught in the Lord’s day calculated to multiply criminal deeds? Is it possible that extra precautions must be taken on Emperor Constantine’s “Holy Sabbath” to stay the hand of the homicide? Can it be that when a million Christian prayers

are ascending like incense to the Throne of God—and ten thousand preachers turning an honest penny—that people are seized with an unnatural impulse to despoil their neighbors? This being the conceded effect of the Christian Sabbath it would appear desirable to abolish it altogether “as a police regulation,” and the quicker the better.

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NO CROSS-EYED CLERGYMEN.

THE Methodist Episcopal Conference, recently assembled in New York, created something of a sensation by rejecting a candidate for clerical honors because he was cross-eyed. He had studied three years for the ministry and outstripped all his classmates, was admittedly intelligent and of unexceptionable morals; but strabismus was regarded by the theological solons as an insuperable objection, and he was rejected. Many worthy brethren have sharply criticized the action of the conference, but the ICONOCLAST is inclined to commend it. No man who can look two ways at once has any business in the Methodist ministry; he might see too much for a successful exponent of sectarianism. Furthermore, those sanctified gentlemen who assembled in the metropolis of the most enlightened nation the world ever knew, were obeying the imperative command of the Creator as expressed in the Bible, hence a criticism of their action were akin to blasphemy. In the Twenty-first chapter of Leviticus we learn that

“The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to

offer the bread of his God; for whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: A blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or anything superfluous; or a man that is broken-footed, or broken-handed, or crook-backed, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken. . . . he shall not go into the vail nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries."

No intellectual qualifications whatever were suggested, they evidently being considered as superfluous—it was simply stipulated that the priest, like the sacrificial bull, should be a perfect animal, and that he attire himself in "garments for glory and beauty." To the credit of the various religious denominations be it said that in selecting their priests and preachers they have adhered pretty closely to the original plans and specifications. Whenever they have departed therefrom in any marked degree a heresy trial has been sent to trouble them—a swift and awful "judgment" for their sin.

Whether the Lord really gave such a command to Moses, or the latter dreamed it while lying in the dusky arms of his Ethiopian wife, it is not my province to determine; but as a general law, intended to cull out the slick stock for the clergy, it has much to commend it. It were clearly absurd to select the finest specimens of physical manhood to defend the country from fellow mortals, leaving the "scurvy" and the "scabbed" to lead the scattering army of the Lord against the legions of the Devil. Whether flat heads be preferable to flat noses, crooked morals to curved backs and spavined intellect to procreative impotence, can not be considered by the truly orthodox as a debatable question.

Now that the Methodist church has undertaken to make its ministry conform to the Mosaic standard we trust that it will not weary in well-doing, but make thorough work of it. The ICONOCLAST, as the unswerving friend of religious reform, suggests that each candidate be subjected to a rigid medical examination and a system of physical tests in order that the ministerial stud may consist exclusively of thoroughbreds. It would be first necessary to take the aspirant's altitude, as "Little Giants" were not considered eligible by the God of the Jews. Having found that his coat-tails hung sufficiently far from the earth, the next step will be to bring him in *puris naturalibus* before the board of examiners, who will determine whether he has "anything superfluous," then either fire him out or forward him on to the officiating Muldoon to be tested in wind and limb. Having passed the ordeal successfully, his eyes will be examined by an expert oculist, and if it be found that he can look through a keyhole with both at once, this fact will be duly certified and a civil engineer appointed to survey his proboscis and make report. If he finds that it is an incipient mountain peak instead of a lowly *campagna* the candidate will be duly licensed to preach—to carry saving grace to godless sinners.

It is imperative that we have in our fashionable pulpits preachers who will harmonize with their *recherché* surroundings. Placing a hunchback, a cross-eyed man or one with an amorphous snout like that of old Socrates amid the gorgeous trappings of a hundred thousand dollar temple were an insufferable sin against the æstheticism of the age. True, Christ was no brute, if we may believe Isaiah, who, we are assured, was referring to the Saviour when he said: "His visage was more marred than any man, and his form than the sons of men." The Jews "saw

no beauty in him," and the Rev. George C. Needham, in his appendix to the Bible, intimates that physically he was a fright. St. Paul was so terribly homely that the ladies avoided him, and he played for even by putting a time-lock on their mouths and discountenancing marriage. None of the Apostles, so far as we can gather, were calculated to adorn a fashionable pulpit or cause the hearts of the sisters to palpitate with suspicious piety. They traveled extensively, but not on their shape. But we are building neither churches nor ministers on the model supplied us by the Son of Mary. This is "a progressive age"—and the Methodist church has at last caught up with Moses.

* * *

A BRACE OF BELLYACHERS.

It will doubtless sadden our readers to learn that the Lord High Executioner of the Gal-Dal *News* and the proprietor of the San Antonio *Express* have signally failed to find a panacea for that pain which, for some years past, has made their every hour an unspeakable agony. The curt refusal of the Texas people to give the slightest heed to their political advice threw these gentlemen into a violent fit of hysteria, complicated with acute melancholia and a light touch of cirrhosis, called by the vulgar morbid liver. Since Hogg was first elected governor they have been rapidly growing worse, even louder in their lamentations, more alarming to those friends who recognize the difficulty of ministering to a mind diseased. Long and excruciating mental anguish, for which there is no Lethe, has led them to take a pessimistic view of Texas' future and become prophets of evil, professional prognosticators of woe. The burden of their jeremiad is that the State

has been grabbed by the demagogues, who were playing the very devil and Thomas Walker, Esq., therewith, repelling capital, endangering vested rights, ripping artesian wells up by the roots and raising an exuberant crop of political hell, which is not worth the harvesting. Every time they look toward Austin their pain breaks out in a new place; at every revolution of the legislative law-mill they hear the bones of the blessed Goddess of Liberty crunching between the burrs; whenever the chief magistrate suggests a new measure they assume that the Car of Progress has shed a wheel, lost its feed-box or become irremediably stuck in the mud. No single prospect pleases, and man, politically considered, is wholly vile. If the legislature does it is damned, and if it don't a green apple bellyache browsing around in the bread-basket of a small boy could scarcely raise such a ruction. With every breath they tearfully assure foreign capitalists that Texas industries are being trampled beneath the vandal heel of the communistic hobo, and paint for their delectation a picture of our political and economic conditions more dolorous than that which Dante drew of the desolate region where the worm never dies. It is only when they find some ill-informed Yankee editor agreeing with them, or a pompous plutocrat taking a pot-shot at "poor old Texas" from false premises, that a gleam of sunshine permeates their stygian gloom. When they can find some foul son of Sycorax and Satan defaming Texas, or an uncaged idiot denouncing it as a country ruled by ignorant knaves who are hurrying it down to hades, they clasp him to their bosom as a long-lost brother and for one fleeting moment life seems to them really worth the living.

When the *News* first assumed the rôle of Jeremiah, with the *Express* for understudy, great fear and trembling seized upon the Texas people; but that has passed like the

first spasmodic shiver of a shower-bath or the jimmams' grawsome horrors, and once more the radiant star of hope illumines their horizon. They have learned that newspapers, like nightmares, sometimes go by contraries, and now firmly believe that when those in question can see only calamity encompassing us it is a sure sign that cotton will advance two dollars a bale and the cut-worm pass us by. Instead of donning their sackcloth suits and weeping with those who weep, they regard the frequent tears of the *News* and *Express* as fructifying showers, their deep-heaved sighs as happy omens, their dolorous acclaim as joyful sounds proclaiming that Texas is in the middle of the road and headed in the right direction. When these two papers are really happy the people become panic-stricken, take it for granted that there's something radically wrong—some newly conceived plutocratic rotteness in their industrial Denmark. When Cols. Grice and Belo shriek at sun-up it is accepted as a favorable weather signal and the picnic dude puts on his bumble-bee pants; when they make moan in the market place it means more cotton mills; when they rave about demagogues the governor gets a firmer grip on a second term, while their howl by night is a grateful sound in the sick man's chamber. The clouds they have conjured up, instead of causing the Lone Star to pale its ineffectual fires, has not modified our climate, made Dallas a popular summer resort and cooled the zephyrs which, during $364\frac{3}{4}$ days in the year, toy with the Wacoite's coat-tails while filling his eyes full of sand.

Fortunately the dolor of the Gal-Dal and the chronic heartache of the *Express* are reserved for home consumption—do not reach the ear of the eastern capitalist, their circulation not extending beyond the State. While the ceaseless sighing of these twin Jobs may prove a trifle

unpleasant to sensitive souls, we must bear in mind that even here in Texas the bitter is mingled with the sweet—that the deadly bacillus roosts ever upon the roseate lip of beauty, while in the social cup there lurks the four-legged snake or the feathered simian. In the meantime the *ICONOCLAST* would advise its readers throughout the North and East that while Texas is not a political Paradise, it approaches as near thereto as do any of its sisters. Our laws relating to corporations could doubtless be improved without much mental effort on the part of a practical economist: still they are no worse than those in force in a dozen other States, whose "great dailies" are not putting up danger signals to keep out foreign capital. Texas offers as inviting a field for the employment of wealth and the application of elbow-grease as the world affords. Even the *News* and *Express* are making money as well as moan. The managing editor of the Dallas *News* recently boasted that his paper had added 4,000 subscribers within the year—"had just doubled its circulation." Does that look like Texas was going to the dogs? The proprietor of the *Express* struck Texas "on his uppers" but a few years ago, yet he is now a man of wealth and lives like a lord. Yes, "poor old Texas!" She has been shamefully defamed by those she has fattened, has enriched the children of others only to be reviled.

* * *

CURRENCY AND COMMON SENSE.

AN IMMUTABLE MEASURE OF VALUE.

THE reformation of our currency is preëminently the question of the hour—the rock upon which the Democracy has been rent in twain, the lion in the path of the g.o.p.

It is engrossing the attention of the entire people, who realize that upon its intelligent solution largely depends the general prosperity. An imperfect exchange medium is not the sole cause of our commercial ills, but it was probably the chief factor in producing that industrial depression from which the entire world seems to be suffering. The economic M.D.'s have long been in consultation anent our valetudinarian currency, and like most doctors, have agreed to disagree. The homeœopathists insist that our monetary system is simply suffering from hysteria produced by the silver shock and needs but little medicine, but the allopaths would give it a drastic dose of white dollars—in accordance with the *similia similibus curantur* theory; the eclectics recommend the bimetallic bolus, while the experimentalists insist upon the fiat faith cure. When doctors disagree the patient usually dies. And while the learned M.D.'s debate, every omni-nescient animal that can straddle about on two legs volunteers his opinion—adds to the confusion worse confounded. Even the editor of the *Houston Post*, who probably knows less about more things than any other man alive, aspires to lead the country out of the currency bogs, while George Clark mounts a gum stump in the economic wilderness like another Nehushtan and implores those troubled with financial snakes to look upon him and live.

It is not my present purpose to discuss the merits or demerits of the single and double standards, greenback and sub-treasurism; but to point out the desirability of securing an immutable measure of value and the utter impossibility of accomplishing that financial feat by any of the methods so vehemently urged by different schools of pseudo-economists.

By means of credit the bulk of our business is transacted. The dollar is the measure of the value of credit,

as it is of the value of cotton, hence the vital importance of keeping it ever at the same standard. The price of gold and silver, like the price of pork and potatoes, is governed by the supply relative to the demand, hence a metal money of final payment can no more afford an immutable measure of value than can a bushel of barley or a pound of putty. The purchasing power of the gold dollar may be increased or diminished by the contraction or expansion of either currency or credit; or by fluctuation in the volume of business requiring an exchange medium. Its relation to all other forms of wealth may be altered, it may become a different measure of value.

The yard, the pound and the gallon are immutable measures of quantity, and those who buy and sell by them do so in perfect confidence. But suppose they altered from month to month, or from year to year? Would not such a ridiculous system of weights and measures paralyze exchange and demoralize industry? Would not those who could juggle the system to suit their purpose—buying by a long and selling by a short yard—accumulate colossal fortunes at the expense of the common people?

That is exactly what is happening to the dollar, our measure of value, the most important of all our trade tools. And a change in the purchasing power of the dollar is equivalent to an alteration of every weight and measure employed in the exchange of commodities. Is it any wonder that "confidence" sometimes collapses—that we have "panics" in plenty and "depressions" galore?

In the ICONOCLAST for December, 1891, I outlined my idea of a perfect currency system. The plan has since received considerable attention, especially from the bankers of Berlin, and was the basis of a currency bill introduced in the Fifty-second Congress. I proposed to base our currency on interconvertible government bonds, instead of

upon the precious metals—on the entire wealth of the Nation, instead of upon one or two comparatively unimportant products, the supply of which depends chiefly upon chance. That gold and silver do not constitute a safe currency basis has been time and again demonstrated, not by logic alone, but by conditions. It was made manifest in the summer of 1893, and frequently before that time. It is forcibly illustrated to-day by the sharp advance in the purchasing power of gold and all currencies bottomed thereon, by the low price of the farmer's products and the idle legions of labor.

The volume of currency necessary to properly effect exchanges can never be properly gauged by a body of politicians swayed by adverse interests, and it were ridiculous to leave its regulation to the luck of prowling prospectors for the precious metals. The currency should be left to commerce itself—should be controlled, not by congressional fiat or foolish luck, but by the ever-reliable law of supply and demand.

Let the government sell just as many one per cent. convertible currency bonds as the people will buy, the proceeds constituting a redemption fund. Any having United States currency of any kind could exchange it for these bonds, redeemable on demand. This could not add a penny to the currency; it would simply drain off any surplus that might exist and give it forth again when needed. It is purely a regulative force; an expansive one must be found.

Let the government add full legal tender treasury notes to the volume of currency just so long as the increase will remain in the channels of trade. Suppose that \$1,000 in treasury notes is added to the general revenue fund. It is paid out in defrayment of governmental expenses and enters the arteries of trade. If needed it will remain in

circulation; if not needed it will return to the government in exchange for currency bonds. But Congress might continue to add to the currency after the volume became sufficient, and every dollar drained off by the bonds would increase the interest-bearing national debt. The government would practically be borrowing money with which to pay current expenses. An automatic check must be found.

Add more treasury notes to the volume of currency only when the bond exemption fund falls below fifty millions.

When the people are buying bonds—when money is flowing into the redemption fund—the currency is redundant and the surplus is coming to the government because it cannot find more profitable employment. When they are selling bonds—when money is flowing out of the redemption fund—the volume of currency is too small to properly serve the ends of commerce. In the bond redemption fund we have an infallible indicator of the currency requirements of the country, the figures going up or down as commerce calls for less or more money.

If the volume of currency be smaller than is necessary to properly effect exchanges its purchasing power appreciates—the price of commodities and the wage of labor decline—until it is equal to the work required of it. By the system here suggested the currency would expand in volume until equal to the exigency and our measure of value be in nowise disturbed—our yard would remain at 36 instead of expanding to 40 or 50 inches. Bonds would flow into the treasury and money flow out, the bondholders exchanging the low interest paid by government for the greater rewards of commerce. When the currency is redundant; when there is more money in the country than can readily find employment—more trade tools than trade

—it depreciates in purchasing power until all is employed; the yard shortens. By this system the surplus would be drained off, the equilibrium maintained and our measure of value remain immutable. Commerce, being the sole judge of its own needs, would always have money enough and never too much. The system would be automatic, as certain in operation as the law of gravitation. Neither Congress, hounded on by a hungry debtor class, nor Wall Street, eager to embrace the power of capital, could have any effect upon it.

Because of the low interest rate only the surplus money of the Nation would be invested in currency bonds, and as the check is automatic the excess could never become large. The people would be provided with an adequate and flexible currency at less than the cost of the present inadequate and non-flexible metal “wheel of circulation.”

It has been suggested that to prevent an increase in the volume of currency capitalists might purchase and hold a heavy block of interconvertible bonds and by keeping the redemption fund at the required figure effectually block the further issue of treasury notes. To avert this danger a second test might be applied. When there are no buyers of currency bonds it is evident that there is no surplus money in the country. It should be the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury to test his currency gauge under such conditions to see if it had been tampered with. This he could do by issuing treasury notes until bond buying again became active, and the certainty that he would do this would prevent any “salting” of the redemption fund by Wall Street.

It has been often urged that as the bulk of our business is now effected without the actual use of money, the currency question is of little real importance. Money is the breath in the nostrils of “exchange.” It is the vital spark

in every check, draft and transfer. It is the substance of which we are the shadow, hence it would continue of paramount importance if the development of our exchange system allowed us to transact our business with a currency per capita of one copper cent.

Grounded on the constantly expanding national wealth, instead of upon fragments of metal of fluctuating value, the currency would command perfect confidence and render money panics impossible. Adapting itself automatically and infallibly to the requirements of commerce, it would obviate the many ills engendered by a shifting measure of value. Prices of commodities would be governed by the law of supply and demand as applied to themselves instead of to the exchange medium. A perfect and plentiful currency would probably not cure every industrial ill and abolish all our poorhouses, but would have much the same effect as an abundance of cheap and fertile lands. Enterprise would be encouraged and labor assured steadier employment, the logical sequence of which is better wages and a higher standard of living.

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DRUMMER'S NUMBER.

THE ICONOCLAST has ever been a favorite with Commercial Travelers, and to their kindly offices is largely due its extensive circulation. Whenever a letter comes floating in from the far East or the ultimate West, holding in its embrace a dollar bill and crying aloud, "Send me the ICONOCLAST—but where in h—l is Waco?"—we feel that some friendly "angel" has been evangelizing for the Great Religious. Being a firm believer in the doctrine of reciprocity, the ICONOCLAST will, in its June number, discuss that hustling apostle of trade, "The American

Drummer." Several thousand extra copies will be printed and every T. P. A. Post throughout America supplied with a complimentary package for distribution among the "boys." Hotels desiring advertising space in the "Drummers' Number" should address the ICONOCLAST at once.

If you fall on the wrong side of the market men will quote the proverb about a fool and his money; if on the right side, you're a "Napoleon of finance." Lead a successful revolt and you're a pure patriot whose memory should be preserved to latest posterity; head an unsuccessful uprising and you're a miserable rebel who should have been hanged. Had the Christian religion failed to take root Judas Iscariot would have been commemorated in the archives of Rome as one who helped stamp out the heresy, and had Washington got the worse of it in his go with Cornwallis he would have passed into history as a second Jack Cade.

Constantine Buckley Kilgore once admitted that he gave up farming because, like the old granger's son Jim, his judgment was not equal to the task of engineering a double-shovel plow in a stump lot, or abstracting brindle calves from their parent stem. But that is no reason why President Cleveland should not, as Will Carleton would say, be making a judge outen o' him.

Nature plays no favorites. When she gives a man a lower-case brain she makes amends by supplying him with a display-type mouth.

WILDE AND HIS WORSHIPERS.

SINS OF A DECADENT CIVILIZATION.

SOME years ago Oscar Wilde toured this country as the apostle of æstheticism, the acme of culture, the *chef d'œuvre* of nineteenth century civilization. As might have been expected, all the fashionable fools went into ecstasies over their fellow idiot who had invented, as an *ennui* antidote, a new method of playing the ass. Wilde wore his pants cut short and his hair cut long, adopted the sunflower as the insignia of his particular brand of *fin de siècle* folly and was so ultra-refined, so overly-nice that when I suggested a double dose of compound cathartic pills as the proper prescription for his complaint all dude-dom suffered an acute attack of hysteria. That a creature so æsthetic that he became intoxicated on the odor of sweet violets could be either puked or purged was regarded by his devotees as a physical impossibility, a self-evident absurdity. And now this pink of perfection, who proposed to so key the diapason of our souls, that we could find ecstatic bliss in the mute contemplation of that floral abortion, the big sunflower, is in hock for the foulest offense known to the criminal calendar of the unspeakable Turk.

The rise and fall of Wilde means to the average American editor no more than a nine-days' wonder to be exploited for stray pennies; but to the careful student of history it signifies that the sun of our boasted modern civilization has already passed the meridian—that the Anglo-Saxon race is even now descending to that dark realm of intellectual night from which it has risen by a thousand years of determined effort. The dude is ever the

harbinger of moral death and mental decay. "Life is real, life is earnest" to the people who are pressing forward; when it becomes a luxury instead of a battle, then farewell the bays. When the purse of a people is light its sword is keen, its morals severe, its heart strong, its ambition mounts to the very stars; but with great wealth comes slothful ease and dilettanteism to the few, oppression and despair to the many, degradation to all. Greece toiled sword in hand up Parnassus' rugged steeps, and stood, poised in midheaven, the exemplar of mankind; then sank, beneath the enervating touch of luxury, until she became the servant of a slave. When the pride of the Imperial City was in the forum and her heart was in the field it was greater to be a Roman than to be a king; but, when drunk with conquest and corrupted by wealth, it exchanged the severe simplicity of the she-wolf's wards for abnormal sybaritism, the flame of genius faded from her seven hills and the scepter of the world passed from her hand forever.

That Wilde should long reign a popular favorite proves that Europe and America are already rank with that effeminate dilettanteism which marked the decadence of every nation that has forged to the forefront of civilization only to sink back into semi-savagery. True, we seem still to mount, just as did Rome in the Augustan age; but the men who furnish the dynamics, now as then were bred in simpler time and can leave no successors. The expiring candle ever burns with a brighter flame, Life rallies all her forces at the very gates of death.

The immorality of a decaying is ever more debasing than that of an advancing civilization. Toil, ambition, avarice itself are conducive to continence; luxury and indolence breed licentiousness and pervert the passions; hence we need not wonder if, a few years hence, the offense

of Wilde is regarded as but a venial fault—harmonizing well with that hyper-culture of which he is the apostle. Being on the down grade, with all brakes off, there is really nothing to prevent the Anglo-Saxon surpassing the vices of Rome in the heyday of her æsthetic degradation, and putting Sodom itself to shame.

Unfortunately gross immorality among men and the general tendency of the age to luxurious trifling, is by no means the only evidence of decadent civilization. Here in America women have been convicted of undue intimacy with each other, which, we opine, is something of an improvement on anything ancient Pompeii could boast; while every considerable city is now infested with a class of male bipeds whose offenses against the canons of decency are too brutish to be mentioned in any publication less elevating in character than the Christian Bible. But more significant even than this is the tone of the popular literature of the day and the character of the plays most popular with the people. Not a dozen novels have defrayed the cost of their publication during as many years that did not, to a greater or less degree, glorify those who had fractured the Seventh Commandment, and theatrical managers can scarcely be brought to consider a "society drama" that does not apotheosize some rotten drab. The whole tendency of the art of the age is to sensuality; the daily newspaper that would decline to publish full details of every salacious divorce case and breach of promise suit would soon find itself *sans* patrons, while the very elect of the Lord will take into their homes and spread before their children journals containing glaring advertisements of panaceas for private diseases known only to unlicensed prostitutes and their paramours.

Many socialistic M. D.'s now tampering with the body social are quite sure that salacious art and literature is

the cause of the general laxity of morals; but their diagnosis is altogether erroneous. Lax morality is the cause of depraved art and unclean literature. The artist paints, the publisher prints and the manager stages, not what the public should approve, but what it will pay for. The idea that public opinion is molded by the press, the pulpit and the stage as the pickaninny shapes mud-pies is all moonshine. They adapt their wares to the market just as does the merchant.

A century ago the American people, united by common dangers and mutual poverty, were battling for political existence, battling with the unconquered forces of nature, battling with the wild beasts and still more savage men of the woods and the struggle brought out their strength, made them veritable men of iron and around them grew up sons worthy of such heroic sires. In those days it could be truly said that

“Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow.”

Our progress and our triumphs are due to those bred to toil and privations, not as slaves but freemen and peers of the proudest in the land—men who had to rely upon their own strong hands to fill their mouths and defend their heads, but could stand in their homespun suits unawed before princes. But these men are passing away, and in their place we find one class bred to luxury, another to industrial slavery, with many gradations between, each aping the one above it—trying to rise in the social scale above the conditions to which it was born, not by the might of worth, the power of intellect, but by fashionable excesses which it can ill afford. In this day

“Wealth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,
The rest is all but leather and prunella.”

Under such conditions morality fails, and history teaches that mental degeneration must inevitably follow —that no people divided between sybarites and slaves can long remain in the van of human progress.

It's a curious coincidence that when the doctors began writing their prescriptions in Latin it quickly became a "dead language."

* * *

A THREE-CORNED CONTROVERSY.

PERHAPS the most interesting event in the theological world since our last issue was a Midshipman Easy duel with "Pagan Bob" Ingersoll, Sam Jones and Father Pat Brannon on bases. Jones had been fairly stinking for attention at the hands of the great agnostic for many moons, and at last the latter condescended to notice him. It constitutes an epoch in the life of the latter to which he will look back with a satisfaction similar to that of the Russian subject who boasted that he had been kicked by the Czar. Col. McCullagh, the presiding deity of the *Globe-Democrat*, is the bosom friend of "Pagan Bob" and the patron of the Georgia preacher, having been the first to bring the latter prominently before the public. But for the kindly offices of Col. McCullagh Sam might still be "a youth to fortune and to fame unknown." Jones prevailed upon his patron to have him interviewed on Ingersoll, and to have Ingersoll interviewed on Jones. Bob demurred, but finally yielded to his old friend's blandishments, consented to dignify the ambitious evangelist with a dressing down and proceeded to walk his log until Sam's logical diaphragm resembled a stale custard pie that had been slammed up against a brick block by a Kansas cy-

clone. The impudence and egotism, slang and stale stories of the preacher were no match for the pitiless logic and polished rhetoric of the pagan. Pitting Jones against Ingersoll were like fighting a buzz-saw with a bad smell. During the mêlée the agnostic asserted that the doctrines inculcated by Christianity were immoral, and this brought Father Brannon on the field of battle. In some respects the priest is even an abler man than the pagan, and his ringing response to the Ingersollian assault is a magnificent addition to controversial literature, scarce equaled since the days of Junius and Dr. Johnson. The only fault we find with Father Brannon's rejoinder is the bellicose manner in which it is made. The bludgeon should have no place in the intellectual tourney, yet the reverend father employs it freely. His fling at Ingersoll's war record is a most unfortunate example of "fighting the devil with fire." It has been pretty clearly demonstrated that the stories told of Ingersoll's cowardice have as little foundation in fact as those formerly retailed from the pulpit anent Tom Paine's death-bed repentance; but even were he so great a craven as Demosthenes himself, that fact would not negate the objections he urges to the Christian faith. The philippics of the Athenian orator are no less forcible because he fled from the field of battle, nor can we reject the matchless logic of Lord Bacon because we know that he was an arrant knave. Nay, if we make brute courage the sole test of moral worth, what becomes of that "rock" upon which the Catholic church is supposed to have been founded? Matthew informs us that when Christ was apprehended in the Garden of Gethsemane "all the disciples forsook him and fled." Of the entire lot Peter was the only one who ventured back—his curiosity evidently getting the better of his cowardice. Judas had decency enough to go

hang himself for his desertion, but if any of his companions even apologized no record is made of the fact. "Peter followed afar off," sneaked into the palace of the high priest and concealed himself among the servants, not to assist his stricken Lord, but "to see the end." He was spotted, however, and when accused of being Christ's associate indignantly denied it. Finding himself in a close corner he "began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man." Now I submit that if the Apostles would forsake the Incarnate Son of God when confronted by a miserable rabble armed only with swords and staves, Ingersoll might be pardoned for taking French leave when slammed up against the batteries of the Southern Confederacy. If Father Brannon can forgive St. Peter for denying the Saviour, to his face, he should not be too hard on Col. Ingersoll for doubting the divine origin of a gentleman to whom he was never introduced. But despite the blemishes herein pointed out, Father Brannon's defense of the Christian faith is both brilliant and forcible, and I opine that Col. Ingersoll will be in no haste to reply. He has been a trifle shy of the Catholic priesthood since his experience with Father Phelan. A wise man usually knows when he's got enough of a good thing, and Col. Ingersoll was never accused of being a fool.

* * *

FOOLS AND REFORM.

A LAREDO gentleman takes his pen in hand to inquire: "What do you suggest as a cure for the prevailing hard times?"

I have no panacea for business depressions. It would be a great comfort to believe that placing fiddle-strings on the free list or increasing the tariff tax on toothpicks,

that a deluge of white dollars or a few cords of fiat currency would cause the winter of our discontent to blossom at once into glorious summer. The possessor of a commercial catholicon has only to pull the cork and let peace and plenty flow forth unto a grateful people as from Ceres' cornucopia. Unfortunately, the economic alchemists have ever been long on promise but short on performance. Their Golden Age keeps receding like the pot of rupees at the rainbow's base—lies ever just beyond the next election. A small cottage on the earth is worth a legion of large castles in the air; a pork pie in the dinner-pail double-discounts Olympian nectar in the Land of Nod,—a palliative of approved worth is better than a panacea with a broken trolley-pole.

It profits us nothing to complain that capital is despoiling labor, for each grasps the uttermost that it can. Philanthropy may be—perhaps—a political and religious force, but selfishness is the dynamics of all trade and industry. Preaching altruism in the market place were wasted energy. Conditions instead of theories govern there. We need borrow no trouble anent the division of the "joint product of capital and labor" when the latter is fully employed, for the wage of labor, like the price of pork, is governed by the law of supply and demand. When we set employers to bidding against each other for labor, instead of the workmen to striving with each other for employment, capital will be the factor in the creation of wealth compelled to content itself with the smaller portion. Capital now yields to labor the least it can; it will then freely give to the utmost it can afford, and the much- vexed "wage question" will no longer require the attention of busy law-builders, diamond-studded "walking delegates" and other economic doctors. Then will pass like an uneasy dream the dark age of magnificence and

misery, the plutocrat and the pauper. The creative god of labor will no longer be led captive by its own creature, bowing down like a barbarous helot before the work of its own hands.

If any fact has been fully demonstrated it is that the cumulative wisdom of commerce is superior to that of any body of Solons ever assembled upon the earth. When government arbitrarily interferes with trade conditions disaster is almost certain to ensue.

What commerce desires above all things is stability. It cares not so much whether the policy of government be high or low tariff as that it be not subject to sudden and arbitrary alteration. It cares not so much whether it be placed on a 100-cent gold or a 50-cent silver basis as that it know what it can confidently depend upon. It can adapt itself to almost any condition and prosper if assured that the condition is a permanence—that it will not be radically altered on the accession of a new job-lot of empirics to political power. Hence it is important that we devise the best possible governmental policy and adhere to it tenaciously. When change becomes absolutely necessary let it be effected gradually instead of by a rude and oftentimes unexpected shock. The wise man will ever touch the supersensitive nerves of trade with fear and trembling, but the fool fiddles upon them with his “reform” bow in perfect confidence. He shoves the tariff up or down, inflates or contracts the currency, alters the land laws or the legal interest rate simply to subserve a partisan purpose, and when not enacting some reckless “reform” measure calculated to demoralize industry he is threatening to do so, which is about as bad. The economic quacks keep capital in a constant fever, a perpetual state of alarm, and labor, being dependent upon its co-operation, has to suffer for their sins. But the “issue”

is the breath in the nostrils of partisan politics, and there can be no issue—no pole for the official persimmon, no fork for the public flesh-pots—without proposed changes in governmental policy. An American election without a “burning issue”—which promptly incinerates all enterprise not of the political variety—were as inconceivable as an effect without a cause.

In a country where the ignorant Ethiopian is the political peer of the college president and the Italian lazzerone stands on a suffrage level with the intellectual lord; where the doggery is a political dynamo and votes may be bought in “blocks-of-five,” it were idle to look to that “enlightened public sentiment,” of which we hear so much, to frown down these frequent and fallacious changes,—to expect a wise and stable governmental policy that will encourage rather than cripple commerce and industry while brazen ignorance triumphs over modest merit at the ballot-box and rank demagogery relegates patriotism to private life. When the fruit is bad the tree is evil. We have made American citizenship entirely too cheap. We allow every creature that can poise on its hind legs and call itself a man, to become a factor in the formation of our public policy—to sway the scepter of American sovereignty. Not content with this, we are now extending the fasces of authority to females, regardless of whether they know a fundamental principle of our form of government from a Parisian fashion-plate. We cannot gather grapes from thorns or figs of thistles. We must apply an intellectual suffrage test and bar the ignorant from the ballot-box before the American body politic can bring forth good fruit. Allow no man to vote, be he millionaire or mendicant, lord of classic lore or unlettered hind, who cannot give a lucid explanation of what he is voting for,—the duties of the official he seeks to elect, the public

policy to which his legislative favorite is pledged. We have carried the enchanting doctrine of "political equality" too far and are paying the penalty. The rebound from the monstrous doctrine of the divine right of monarchs has hurried us into equal error. Disgusted with the rottenness of the established religion, the French people once crowned a prostitute as the Goddess of Reason. Maddened by the insolence of hereditary officialism, our fathers placed the rod of power in the hoodlum's reckless hand and bound upon the stupid brow of hopeless nescience Columbia's imperial crown. That the greater must guide the lesser intelligence is nature's immutable law. To deny this were to question our own right to rule the beast and God's authority to reign King of all mankind. Unless Reason be the "card" and "Passion but the gale" our good Ship of State will run inevitably upon the rocks. Self-preservation will yet compel us to guard the sacred privileges of American sovereignty as jealously as did Rome her citizenship.

Slattery, who is now trying to pull the Catholic Church up by the roots, declares that he was a priest for eight years. If his tale be true, he was industriously pandering to the "Whore of Babylon" all that time while perfectly cognizant of her true character. Slattery is giving an excellent imitation of a Smart Alec who wearied of plodding along as an obscure priest and concluded to fire the Ephesian dome to get his name in print and put a few scudi in his pocket.

The ICONOCLAST is neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. Nor has it acquired a crop of Third Party fleas; but unless all signs fail "the banner dimmocratic state" will, in 1896, go Populist with a whoop that will

reverberate from Tadmor in the Wilderness to Yuba Dam.

* * *

FAVORITE FALSEHOOD.

OF THE TEXAS PENCIL PUSHERS.

THE Texas Press Association meets at Waco in May, when there will be a feast of reason and a flow of artesian water to amaze the gods. All our brethren from the back districts will be on deck, attired in bright smiles and badges, wearing their beavers up and carrying free passes in their inside pockets ; but a number of the metropolitan gang will fail to get here. Some will be too busy to come, while others will be short the necessary clean shirt. Charlie Edwards is anchored in St. Louis, absorbing Mississippi River water and pounding brick pavement instead of careering gaily over the broad pampas of his beloved Texas like a frisky two-year-old. Kalamity Bonner of the *Harpoon* will have to remain at home to see that the honk-a-tonks do not take full possession of Houston, while B. M. Vanderhurst has taken a contract to fan the flies off the late lamented Hogg Administration with a copy of the Galveston *News*. Farmer Shaw is very busy with his spring plowing and cannot be expected to leave his team afield to join the festivities, while Mose Harris has undertaken the herculean task of purifying the boodle politics of Bexar county. Nat Q. Henderson has just been promoted to a captainship in the Salvation Army and Jeff McLemore is hiding in the chaparral to avoid the burdensome tax upon old bachelors. But if absent in body they will be with us in spirit. The *ICONOCLAST* will attempt to reconcile our visitors to the unavoidable by relating, in its poor stammering way, a few of the stories which they

would probably tell if they could get here—and none of their auditors had guns. Not having a stenographic report of former sessions at hand we must trust entirely to memory; so if we occasionally get the right man coupled up with the wrong story it will be his misfortune, not our fault. To fully appreciate the flavor of these o'er-true tales they should be taken standing, with the back to a mahogany bar, a hot weinerwurst in one hand and a schooner of ice-cold beer securely anchored in the other. Like wine—or cheese—the more ancient the vintage the better the bouquet.

CHAS. A. EDWARDS.

The Democratic party of to-day reminds me of a jaybird that was stuck on itself, as jaybirds are wont to be. He was flirting about in the woods one day, admiring himself and hollering with his mouth open like a Populist whose party has made a flutter at the presidency and carried a precinct. Sez he to himself, sez he: "I'm the finest thing that wears feathers. That's whatever. I'm gay but not gaudy, a daisy but no dude. I'm the Berry Wall of birds when it comes to clothes, and the Jim Corbett of the atmosphere when you talk fight. I'm an all-round, copper-riveted, ring-tailed, rip-snorter, I am, and don't you disrecollect to remember it."

Just then a hungry hen-hawk that was sailing around seeking whom it might refer to its internal economy, sighted Mr. Bluejay and came down on him like a Hogg majority on the Prohibition party. The jay, with his head perked on one side like a corn-fed belle at a country ball, sighted the hawk and slid for a hole in a holler tree like a toboggan making time on a soaped track. The hawk hit the east end of the west-bound jay just as the

latter made home-base and yanked a fistful of feathers. "Keno," says the jay: "Oh h—l," says the hawk, and so they parted. The Jim Corbett of the atmosphere finally crawled out of his hole, looking like a blue yarn sock that a brindle calf had chewed, and took an invoice of himself, so to speak. "Well," sez he, "I lost my tail, but I saved my life." The Democratic party is just like that bluejay. Just as it got to feeling that it was the cock o' the woods it lost its tail feathers—was thankful to escape with its life.

STEPHEN GOULD.

It is a popular superstition that Horace Greeley wrote the worst hand of any American editor; but his chirography was display type compared with that of Colonel Frank Grice of the San Antonio *Express*. When one of Colonel Grice's articles is fed to the printers the foreman confidently expects to be short a man or two next morning. The river runs right by the office, and after a comp. has struggled with about two "takes" of the Colonel's copy he wills his "string" to his favorite undertaker and falls in. That's what killed all the fish some time ago—they had printer's colic. When I was managing editor of the *Express* the Colonel would leave me written instructions whenever he was called out of town. I'd take 'em to a mind-reader, and if he failed to strike the combination, I'd sell 'em for Chinese tea-box labels and put the proceeds in my casualty fund. Once the boss went down to the City of Mexico to remain a week, leaving me the usual assortment of hieroglyphics. I knew the instructions were important, but to save me I couldn't sense 'em. I wired the Colonel and received a Sphynx riddle in reply, the operator adding that, being unable to read the message,

he had culled the desired number of words from a convenient dictionary. I tried it again and the following is all I could make of the sibylline oracle I received:

“Just discovered that Uncle Dan McGary of the *Houston Age* is author of ‘Beautiful Snow.’ Send man to interview him; two column spread; great scoop.”

I had always suspected Uncle Dan of writing Browning’s poetry, so was not much surprised. I had a slick young reporter who had come out from the East with a small case of consumption and a large crop of egotism. I sent him over to see Uncle Dan, but the latter thought the young gilly was guying him and chased him into Buffalo Bayou with a shot-gun. When the Colonel got home he was hot.

“Why didn’t you follow my instructions?” he demanded. I replied that I had done so to the very letter, and in proof thereof I produced the document. As he couldn’t read it any more’n a rabbit, I escaped without a reprimand.

DR. S. O. YOUNG.

O’Brien Moore was managing editor of the Galveston *News* when the “Old Lady” was putting the gaffles into Mayor Fulton and filling the air with feathers at every flutter. The Zulu war was raging at the time and Col. Bob Lowe and O’Brien used to have pretty hot debates as to whether the credit of the British victories should be accorded to the Scotch regiment or to the Irish contingent, each standing up for the laddies of his native land. Mayor Fulton finally concluded that the time had arrived to lick an editor and he visited the *News* sanctum with blood in his eye and a heavy cane in his good right

hand. O'Brien was out, whether intentionally so, deponent saith not, and the irate chief magistrate of the municipality went to headquarters.

"Who's responsible for those articles in the *News?*" he demanded, and there was a lay-on-MacDuff and damned-be-he-who-first-gets-too-much-of-a-good-thing tone to his voice that was particularly rasping to Robert.

"Dinna ye ken, mon? I'm responsible," was the reply.

Then they mixed it a few verses and both got pretty badly battered up. It was a drawn battle with honors easy, but heads quite otherwise. After the affray the general manager was taking a little water on the side to remove the stains when O'Brien put in an appearance and asked excitedly:

"Have you seen him?"

Colonel Lowe relaxed his hold on the office towel, turned slowly and said with a dignity that would frappé absinthe:

"Aye, mon, I have seen him. The Scotch regiment was to the front but the dommed Irish contingent was na-whares ta be found."

B. M. VANDEEHURST.

Bill Shakespeare, Bill Shaw or some other bilious philosopher, has informed us that there is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune, but if you fail to get afloat at the proper time you'll lay out on the beach and sour like a stranded jellyfish, or words to that effect. Well, sir, the tide struck me once fair and square, but my bark failed to get on the bright blue sea. In 1892 I went over into the mountains of Mexico to fill up with ozone for the Hogg-Clark campaign. One night I was camped with a family consisting of one

part greaser, four parts dog and five parts flea, and was putting a few tortillas, frijoles and other Mexican fixings under my surcingle so as to be able to cast a shadow, Suddenly from out of the jackal there issued what seemed like half a dozen "devil chasers" that went skirmishing around the ground like so many streaks of many-colored flame. I examined them and saw that they were snakes—a female about a foot long and her brood of babies no bigger'n angle-worms. I had read somewhere about fiery serpents, but those were the first I ever saw—and I have been voting the Democratic party all my life. Suddenly the old snake ran into the muzzle of an army musket that lay near me and all her kids followed her. "Now," thought I, "if you're snakes you're in a bad box; if you're not snakes, then the Lord help me if I ever do so any more." With that I pointed the musket at the Milky Way and pulled the trigger. Well, sir, those snakes made the prettiest sky-rockets you ever saw, but, like the old cat, they never came back. If I'd saved 'em and started a snake ranch I could have furnished the Populists with all the fireworks they want when they capture the country in '96, and made a million o' money. That New Jersey man's skunk ranch wouldn't 'a' been in it as a short cut to wealth. I wrote to a scientist about it—a fellow who's way up in snakeology—and asked him to classify the reptiles. And what do you suppose that duffer did. He wrote back that when he was dallying with the mescal of Mexico he could see funnier things than that with his eyes shut. I tell you we should be careful how we judge our fellow men. As Hamlet—or somebody—says: There are more kinds of snakes in this world than dime museum managers have dreamed of in their philosophy.

SLATTERY AND HIS DUPES.

EX-PRIEST SLATTERY and his ex-nun wife swooped down upon Waco recently and scooped in several hundred scudi from prurient worldlings and half-baked Protestants whose chief religious stock in trade is unreasoning hatred of that church which, through the long intellectual night known as the "Dark Ages," preserved to the world the message of our Lord Jesus Christ. Brother Fight-the-Good-Fight was out in force, and many a Baptist dollar went into the coffers of these brazen adventurers that was badly needed for bread. The audiences were representative of that class of so-called Christians which believes that everyone outside its foolish sectarian fold will go to Hell in a hemlock coffin—a national convention of the Salvation Army could scarce make such a showing of No. 6 hats. According to Slattery's own story he would to-day be an ignorant bog-trotter in his native land, carrying the hod or piling turf, but for the kindly offices of the Roman Catholic church, which, by the blessed power of pauper education, raised him above the station to which he was born. According to his own story, he was a priest for nearly eight years before he discovered that there was aught degrading in the confessional, immoral in the theology or ridiculous in the rites of that church which he is now denouncing as the apotheosis of infamy, the incarnation of absurdity. In other words, Slattery has deliberately signed a certificate to the effect that he's a knave or a fool. He can take either horn of the dilemma he likes; but, in all kindness, I would caution the Baptist brethren to beware of him, for there's an old truism to the effect that he who is false to one can be the same to two. After eight years' service in the Baptist ministry he

may suddenly discover that there's something rotten in that religious Denmark also, and flop to infidelity, where he properly belongs. During one of his so-called lectures here Slattery took occasion to pay his respects to the ICONOCLAST, declaring that it stated in its April issue that "the Catholics were the first to establish religious liberty in America," and animadverting upon its "ignorance." The ICONOCLAST said nothing of the kind. The Rev. Joseph Slattery, "Baptist minister in good standing," deliberately lied. Not only did Slattery lie, but he defamed this paper by attributing to it his own brutal ignorance of the English language. He further declared, with that bravado peculiar to cowards when surrounded by their sympathizers, that "if the ICONOCLAST dared impeach his moral character he would make it prove it in court." It branded him in its April issue, from which he deliberately misquoted, as a "blackguard," "a foul-mouthed calumniator and brazen adventurer." It now repeats those epithets and adds that he is an ingrate and an ignoramus as well, a malicious liar and a blatant bully—and it is ready to "prove it in the courts," whenever it pleases the Rev. Joseph Slattery to call its hand.

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THE AMERICAN DRUMMER.

THE APOSTLE OF CIVILIZATION.

THE "Drummer" is distinctively an American institution. If we did not invent we developed him. He is not unknown to other lands, but the practice of "drumming trade" has been brought to the highest perfection in this hustling, pushing Republic of the West. The American

merchant, like Mahomet, will go to the mountain if the altitudinous realty declines to skate over to him. Instead of bestriding a gum stump, like Patience on a monument, and waiting for some accommodating cow to back up to the milk-pail, he sends his agents out to round up the procrastinating bovine. He agrees with the poet that "all things come to him who waits"—including unpaid bills and bankruptcy. The day has gone by when it were possible to build up a profitable business without hard and persistent hustling—and that's what the Drummer is here for.

But he is more than an important trade factor; he is an apostle of civilization, nay, of religion itself—the religion of humanity. He penetrates every city, town and hamlet, bringing the people of the various sections of our common country into closer fellowship, making stupid provincialism impossible. He has wiped out Mason and Dixon's line, and had he been so progressive and powerful a century ago, would have prevented the growth of that sectional bitterness which culminated in blood. He is a public educator, a disseminator of new ideas, an inculcator of tolerance for the opinion of others, which, with the fear of God, is "the beginning of wisdom." He binds the people of the North and the South, the East and the West, together with the golden chains of commerce, of mutual interest, which are stronger than sentiment, paramount even to patriotism. He carries into the country the polish of the city, into the city the vigor of the country. With all due respect to the "cloth," I believe that we could better spare the D. D.'s for a thousand years than the Drummers for one day. The labor of the first has a tendency to produce faction, that of the latter to bring the entire people into a common brotherhood. If the books were balanced it would perhaps be found that every copper cent

contributed by the ministers of America to feed the orphan and shelter the widow has been covered by the Drummers with a silver dollar. While the preacher has prayed the commercial pilgrim has worked—and “faith without works is dead.”

To catalogue the noble deeds of the American Drummers would require a volume larger than Webster's Unabridged or the Bible. Their purses have been open to the needy,—they are the knights-errant of the new civilization, ever ready to succor the distressed, to shelter the weak and uplift the fallen. Nearly a score of them have laid down their lives for others,—not for relatives or friends, but for men whose hands they had never pressed, for children whose lips they had never touched, for women whose names they did not know. No cenotaph rises to commemorate their sacrifice, no flowers are strewn by a grateful nation upon their graves. No orator with lips of gold commends their heroism, no poet with heart of fire trills forth their praise—the muse of history passes in silence the lowly mounds where reposes the dust of men whose names should be immortal.

It is a popular superstition that the life of the Drummer is one dizzy round of pleasure—that his time is about equally divided between paying attention to charming young ladies met on the train and picking his teeth in front of swell hotels, drawing on his house and being entertained by progressive merchants who are delighted to see him, and who give him *carte blanche* to stock 'em up. I dislike to bring the Drummer down from that ecstatic empyrean where public opinion has placed him; but really, the road angel's wings were not intended for Icarian flights. Should he go sailing “up among the little stars, all around the moon,” he'd soon get a note from the head of his house intimating that he might as well fly

across the ocean, birdie. He is expected to keep very close to the grass, but to avoid its growing under his feet. Will Carleton's catalogue of the qualities necessary to make a competent editor aptly summarizes those of a successful Drummer.

- “ Is your son an unbound edition of Moses and Solomon both?
- Can he compass his spirit with meekness and strangle a natural oath?
- Can he courteously talk to an equal and browbeat an impudent dunce?
- Can he keep things in apple-pie order and do half a dozen at once?
- Does he know how to spur up his virtue and put a check-rein on his pride?
- Can he carry a gentleman’s manners within a rhinoceros’ hide? ”

The prospective purchaser who’s the pink of politeness cannot pay his bills, while the cash customer’s a veritable porcupine who must be approached by siege and parallel. The railway sandwich and gutta-percha pie smite him by day, while the pestilence that walketh in darkness crawls out of its lair and besieges him by night. One day he fares as sumptuously as Dives ever did, and the next dines on bull beef, stale bread and Pefferian butter, then bivouacs in a stuffy room, furnished with a three-legged chair and moldy bed that smells like a second-hand coffin from a nigger cemetery. One day he is cared for like a king and charged two dollars, the next he is required to cough up three cartwheels for being treated as an intruder and fed like a tramp. The servants in one hotel are paid by the proprietor, required to show guests every possible

attention and told to use their Trilbys if caught angling for a tip; in the next they are mere slot-machines into which the Drummer is expected to drop four-bits to get a second-class dinner for which he's afterwards required to pay a dollar. Just about the time he gets his stomach educated to accept anything without a protest, and has become able to sleep on a corn-cob mattress without getting kicked out of his pajamas by a prowling nightmare, he falls in love with some sweet-faced girl, and the thought that he can visit her but once in ninety days, while his rival's fluttering about her four times a week, makes his heart as heavy as his sample-case at the subsequent end of a summer's day. Finally he is wedded and at once begins to look forward to the time when he can leave the road and enjoy the shade of his own vine and fig tree—where he can hear the whistle of a train at two o'clock in the morning without instinctively reaching for his clothes; but he now has a valuable trade established, which as a man of family he cannot afford to sacrifice. So he kisses the semi-widowed wife and the babes who regard him almost as an alien, and goes plodding over the old route, ever longing for the day of his emancipation, which too often comes only with a summons to exhibit his samples to St. Peter.

Comparatively few Drummers are to be found in American prisons, which proves that even the semi-homeless life they lead has not demoralized them, as it would the majority of men. In fact, were they not men of sterling honesty, brains and culture they could not retain their present responsible positions. I think it will be conceded by all careful students of sociology that the intelligence of the commercial travelers, as a class, is higher than the average in any other occupation. This is not the result of

accident; it is the natural effect of a well-defined cause. There was a time—and especially here in the South—when the tendency of the best intelligence was to the professions and politics. The class spirit inherited from European ancestors was still strong within us, and the “tradesman,” no matter how cultured or prosperous, was assigned to a lower position than the veriest mutton-head among professional men. The learned professions constituted the nobility of the New World, and, as Pride is usually the handmaid of Intellect, drew to them the best minds of the Nation. Socially the merchant ranked the mechanic, the mechanic the laborer, and all the journalist, who was regarded as a ne'er-do-well—a mere literary scullion. But class distinction, grounded on vocation, was a European cult, in nowise adapted to the American atmosphere, which vibrated to the cry of “liberty, equality and fraternity.” It perished, and for a nobility founded on occupation was substituted one of brains, and now men are expected to adorn their vocation instead of vice versa. Not only has the “tradesman” been placed on a social equality with his professional brother, but the mechanic has also taken his place in the “American house of lords,” the once despised journalist become a multi-millionaire and, in his own opinion at least, arbiter of the destiny of the Nation. Our successful merchants and miners, inventors and journalists are even crowding the D. D’s, M. D’s aid LL. D’s for social pre-eminence. The rewards of commerce are greater than those of the professions, and the better intelligence of the country, being in nowise indifferent to the almighty dollar nor restrained by social scruples, “goes into trade” and prospers, instead of hanging its shingle on the outer wall and sitting down to semi-starvation. And the very best and brightest minds that commerce can command are put “on the road.”

There's where they are needed. The most stupid block-head may learn routine duty in a great mercantile establishment; but the man sent out in these days of sharp competition and close margins to extend trade, must not only know a hawk from a handsaw and the cost of each, but have an accurate knowledge of human nature. He must be a strategist—be able to win the confidence, even friendship of men of antithetical dispositions, tastes and habits, for the proverb that "there's no sentiment in trade" is far from true. Other things being equal, our custom and our affections keep close company. Pope was probably viewing the Drummer with prophetic eye when he declared that, "The proper study of mankind is man."

We have carried the division of labor too far for the perfect intellectual development of the race. If it once took nine tailors to make a man, it now requires even more "specialists." Each devotes himself to some particular line, whether it be the curing of corns or the expounding of constitutional law, and follows it so assiduously that he usually knows little of anything else. It now requires about a dozen different kinds of doctors to keep the human mechanism in perfect running order—each of the important organs must have its specialist—and the same rule of subdivision obtains in every trade and profession. The specialist usually becomes a one-faculty man instead of a fully developed intellectual athlete. One may know comparatively nothing beyond theology, or some single division of law or medicine, and become wealthy and distinguished if he but know that one thing well; but the Drummer who attempts to do business without a good supply of general information is going to get strung at the quarter-pole. It is an important part of his stock-in-trade—he must be able to interest the prospective purchaser, no matter what his hobby. Shakespeare assures us that "home-keeping

youths have ever homely wits." However that may be, certain it is that the intellect of man is sharpened by frequent contact with his fellows, is strengthened by that stubborn "battle of life" in which the weakest go to the wall.

The Travelers' Protective Association of America was organized in 1882, "For the purpose of furthering the interest of commercial travelers, by giving them better hotel accommodations, cheaper rates of travel and greater allowance of baggage." It got considerably in debt after eight years' existence, and at the convention in Denver in 1890, St. Louis merchants offered to pay the indebtedness, amounting to \$2,200, if the headquarters were located in that city, and this offer was accepted. That year the annual membership fee was raised from \$2 to \$10 and an insurance feature added, allowing \$3,000 in case of death by accident and \$15 a week in case of partial disability. At the reorganization Texas had about four times the membership of any other State. It was, in fact, greater than all the rest combined. Texas was "the banner State" at the close of the first year after reorganization, when the total membership of the National Association amounted to some 1,800. Next year the convention met at Little Rock, and the membership approximated 2,500. The following year it was held at Old Point Comfort, Va., and the membership was about 3,000. In 1893 it was held at Peoria, Ill., and the membership had increased to nearly 4,000. The death indemnity was raised to \$4,000 and the weekly indemnity, in case of disability resulting from accident, made \$25. In 1894 the National convention was held at Milwaukee, Wis., and the membership had increased to over 7,000. The death benefit was raised to \$5,000, the weekly indemnity remaining as before, \$25.

It is believed that the membership now exceeds 11,000—a mighty army of “hustlers” marshaled beneath the banner of Commerce, keeping step to the music of Progress.

The National Convention of the T. P. A. will be held this month in San Antonio, the metropolis of Texas, the most interesting city on the American continent. The “boys” will fall in love with San Antonio, because, like themselves, it is broad-gauged, hospitable, little addicted to the vice of hypocrisy. Many of them who come from the older States will probably expect to find a wild and woolly frontier town, where bad whisky’s four-bits a drink and the festive cowboy chases the elusive longhorn through the principal streets, shoots out the kerosene street-lamps, and rides his broncho up to the bar when yearning for a compound of tarantula-juice and creosote; to be met at the train by a deputation of leading citizens who wear their pants in their boots and boycott their barbers, and welcomed by Mayor Elmendorf from the hurricane deck of a cayuse with an oration somewhat as follows:

“Well, fellers, y’re at the end o’ the trail. We’ve got y’ corraled an’ we’re a-goin’ to treat y’ white. That’s what. We’ve laid in two dozen skins o’ mescal fur the occasion, h’isted the American flag an’ fixed to hang a horsethief fer your amusement. After he’s swung off and has quit kicking we’ll rope a steer jist to show you how it’s done, have a bull-fight in Main Plaza an’ then adjourn t’ the saloon of Alkali Ike an’ enjoy a fandango. If any o’ youens feel like chancin’ yer pile y’ll find the squarest poker game at Ike’s you ever sot into. Play ’er stiff as y’ like. Make yourselves t’ home. If Broncho Pete or Grizzly Bill goes to shootin’ holes in yer plug hats without an invite jist report t’ me, alcalde of the burg, an’ me’n Bryan Callaghan ’ll straighten the cusses out in two shakes of a maverick’s tail. We’ll now have some music

by the Jew's-harp quartette, with Mesquite Charlie workin' in the lead. You'll then take a drink with hiz-zonner, which is me, after which we'll adjourn to my hacienda over on the Nueces and h'ist in a few slugs o' Kansas bacon and biled yerbs."

But those who come expecting to "rough it" will be happily disappointed. They will find a cultured city possessing all the modern improvements, including a municipal debt—a grand old commonwealth gleaming in the glorious sunlight of West Texas, a jewel pendant from the fringe of Civilization's robe. They will find there, as nowhere else in the New World, a romantic blending of the past and present—the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries existing side by side "in harmonious discord." They will find that San Antonio is not so ultra-progressive as some of her sister cities—that her people have not yet cast aside humanity and anointed themselves with hypocrisy, like ancient runners with oil, for that race whose guerdon is gold. San Antonio puts on few frills. Her hospitality is of the old-fashioned sort that may be felt as well as seen. She does not give the stranger a stereotyped two-for-a-quarter smile, an ice-cream handshake and expect to be repaid with a pæan of praise that will send the price of real estate up ten per cent. If he is worthy she takes him to her great warm heart and treats him so well—and so often—that, like the worn voyageurs in the lotos-eaters' land, he's loth to longer roam. Of course there are whining Uriah Heeps with itching fingers, and hypocrites with frappé hearts in the Alamo City, as elsewhere; but she has put them on a "Reservation," figuratively speaking, with other disreputable characters—banished them to a social trans-San Pedro, so to speak, and framed her rule of conduct without their assistance.

San Antonio possesses for the poet, the philosopher and

the student an inexpressible charm. Its skies are brighter than those of France, its airs softer than those of Italy. There Anglo-Saxon chivalry rose to its glorious zenith. There was fought America's Thermopylæ, there Ben Milam led his Spartan band against the fortifications and five-fold force of General Cos, and fell, crowned with the victor's wreath. There was planted the standard of Christian faith when Texas was peopled by wild beasts and still more savage men. On the ancient battlements of San Antonio have floated the banners of six nations, and through her streets for an hundred and fifty years has ebbed and flowed the crimson tide of war.

We must have several days—and nights—for sightseeing in San Antonio. We must dream about the ruined missions where, before our grandsires' day, the savage was taught to humble himself before the sacred cross; about the Alamo, that charnel house of chivalry. We will be shown a dozen different places where Bowie bled and Crockett died; but no matter—it's all holy ground. We must have a Mexican supper in the open air and a talk with the chile queens. We must have hot tamales, with ice cold beer on the side to temper the internal fires, listen to the music in Alamo Plaza and witness the Battle of Flowers. And above all, we must see San Antonio by moonlight—see it from the roof of some tall building when, bathed in the silver flood it becomes a veritable vision of beauty, the apotheosis of romance, a fairy city which, like the baseless fabric of a dream, we expect to fade from sight with the coming of the sun. Beneath the magic rays of the southern moon the grimest adobe is transformed into Parian marble, the meanest jacal becomes an Edenic bower. The turreted postoffice looms up a mighty mediæval castle, the placid river a tangled ribbon of burnished silver, a magic mirror, reflecting the unreal.

A brace of mocking-birds call to each other from the depths of umbrageous foliage, then pour forth a flood of melody such as Orpheus never equaled; the fireflies gleam in the cool gardens; there comes the rhythmic pulse of dancing feet on oaken floors; the sensuous perfume of dew-bespangled flowers hangs heavy in the air and sinks into the blood like voluptuous music, while overhead rides serene the silver Queen of Night, midway between the sleeping earth and "the star-domed City of God." But, as the governor of North Carolina remarked to the chief executive of—Here's hopin'.

I once attempted to become a road angel, but found the flying a trifle too laborious for my feeble wings. I had attained to the mature age of seventeen years when I determined to become a knight of the grip and go forth conquering and to conquer. I noticed that they usually wore good clothes and rode in the ladies' coach; so, with a sigh, I surrendered my cherished ambition to become President of this great Republic and pass my name down to posterity as one of the numerous stepfathers of my country, and devoted all my energies to the accomplishment of my new destiny. I secured a position with an Indianapolis printing house—on commission—and sallied forth into the small towns. I was a Drummer at last and felt, with Monto Cristo, that the world was mine. But it wasn't—at least not just yet. The first merchant I tackled seemed delighted to see me. His "What can I do for you today," was unctuous as the Song of Solomon, as oily as a keg of cottonseed butter; but my reply seemed to freeze the genial current of his soul. His encouraging smile faded like artificial beauty in a picnic shower, his suavity slipped its trolley-pole, his milk of human kindness shrunk from a gallon an hour to half a pint a day. I talked to

him and he listened with the ennuied air of a man to whom life is a burden and heaven not his hope. I learned that he was a Presbyterian, and rung in a few impromptu remarks on original sin without seeming to interest him. Even a short disquisition on foreordination failed to fetch him. I persuaded him to examine my samples and he finally gave some faint signs of life, gradually grew interested and asked for prices. After an hour's séance I was sure of a big C.O.D. order, but he was called to serve a customer, and I waited—trembling on the verge of my first triumph. I was glad that I hadn't killed him during the first ten minutes. I said to myself that with patience for a lever and good-nature for a fulcrum I could move the world. While I was congratulating myself my prospective patron slipped out the back door and went to dinner, leaving a stuttering clerk in charge, who tried to tell me what had become of the boss, but sprung his pneumatic-tire at the half-way house and had to withdraw. When the merchant returned with his surcingle extended a notch or two he told me that he had more stationery than he knew what to do with—had no intention of placing an order. Then I was sorry that I hadn't killed him when I could have proved justifiable homicide. As I slowly packed my samples I resolved never to be polite and patient again—and I haven't. I began to inspect the clothing with which his tables were piled. He at once became interested. Did I want to buy a suit? I hardly knew. I became distant, reserved, and he set to work to thaw me out. I asked for prices and his politeness fairly oozed out at the pores—his milk of human kindness increased momentarily in geometrical ratio. I was persuaded to try on various suits—became well-nigh enthusiastic in the matter of dress. For two hours he perspired and tumbled his stock, trying to find something

that would satisfy my McAllisterian taste, then I told him I was overstocked with clothes—had no intention of ordering more, and departed, feeling that I had tied in the ears of an unconscionable ass a double bow-knot that wouldn't come out in a hurry. By working hard the rest of the day I managed to take one order—for a pack of visiting cards. I told the merchant that I would ship them F.O.B. and draw on him in thirty days. Then I threw my sample-case in the river and hoofed it home. If I ever become a successful Drummer it will be as a member of the Salvation Army.

* * *

THE CAT.

SCIENTISTS agree that the house cat was not included in the inventory of animate things when the Creator rested from His labors. They do not believe that he joined in the chorus when the morning stars sang together, or sat on the fence surrounding the Garden of Eden and sighed his soul out to the flinty-hearted Maria; yet it is certain that some 3,000 years agone the sad-faced Egyptians knew and loved him. In the land of the Ptolemies he was sacred to Isis, and when the sands of his nine lives had ebbed peacefully away he was embalmed and filed away for future reference. It must be confessed that cat mummies are about as handsome as kiln-dried kings, and they are worth as much per pound to grind up into paint to ornament barn doors and late style picket fences. Tabby's origin got lost in the shuffle, and many nervous people who have been disturbed when enjoying a pleasant *tête-à-tête* with Morpheus have heartily wished that he had been chained to his origin and got lost likewise.

It matters not whether Tabby was built in accordance with the original plan, or was the result of an afterthought; he is here, and there are not bootjack factories enough on earth to suppress him. He will live as long as anything else does, and when chaos comes he will be on deck calmly dodging the falling timbers.

The common house cat, the *felis domestica* of the late lamented Cæsars and the modern three-ply college graduate, is built rather long for his elevation, and his component parts are spring-steel, hair, yowl and a propensity to steal. His diet is principally trap-caught mice and canary birds, fresh cream surreptitiously clawed from pans under cover of the night and nothing else, misguided dogs, other cats that inadvertently stray into his bailiwick, and the succulent breath of colicky infants. His principal occupation is minstrelsy. His voice is not bubbling over with melody, but he doesn't appear to be cognizant of this little discrepancy. He sings every time he is asked to, and many times when he could get \$4 and a vote of thanks by maintaining an uproarious silence. Some of his admirers claim, however, that he acquired this bad habit by long association with maiden ladies of uncertain age, cracked voices and a penchant for filling the circumambient ether with false notes and fractured chords upon slight provocation. When Tabby isn't on the back fence trying to frighten himself with his own music, or removing the cuticle from some feline rival, he may generally be found pretending to sleep in front of the kitchen fire, but in reality covertly watching for an opportunity to make a sneak on the milk-pail or the fresh beefsteak.

The cat is the sworn enemy of the dog, yet they are generally to be found occupying the same house. So long as cats and dogs can manage to sojourn under the same roof no pen and ink wrestler or rostrum fiend will be able

to demonstrate that marriage is an irrevocable failure. The cat and dog hate each other cordially seven days in the week, while there are quite a number of husbands and wives in this land of the brave and erstwhile home of a vigorous foreign policy who don't quarrel more than twenty-eight days in the month. Just why Towser dislikes Tabby, and why Tabby returns the compliment with accrued interest, is a problem I will leave for the scientists to wrestle with after they have determined the complexion of the agile cholera microbe and secured a photograph of the yellow fever germ in the act of eluding the quarantine officers. No dog has any standing as a dog until he has relegated at least one full grown feline to the murky shadows of the has-beens, and according to feline ethics no thomas-cat is entitled to lead the choir or take an honored place in the nocturnal councils of his tribe until he has sent a fifty-pound dog ki-yi-ing under the barn, with one eye swinging in the breeze and the ground plan of a Carian mausoleum etched on his nose.

The cat does not go up and down the earth like a loud-mouthed braggart, or a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour; he does not carry a chip on his shoulder and cordially invite every one he meets to knock it off, spit in his eye and tread on his narrative. He is a lover of peace in its most virulent form. He is quick to get his back up, but will climb a tree any time to avoid an unpleasantness with a foolish cur that he knows he can make sausage meat of in one consecutive round. He invariably says: "My dear sir, fighting is not in my line. I hate a beastly row, doncher know; but if you crowd me I'll exert myself to make the occasion one of absorbing interest to you." And he does. The cat has never attended a military school or taken lessons in the more or less manly art of a broken-down third-rate pugilist; yet there is nothing of his weight

or longitudinal measurement on the earth that can make him sing small when he shies his dicer into the ring, spits defiance at his enemy, girds up his back and announces that he is ready to proceed with the obsequies. A cat that fights at fifteen pounds can make anything but a buzz-saw and a he-cyclone take down its sign and flee the country. Many a blooded bull-dog who has won a dozen battles and a hatful of shekels for his proud and haughty master, has lost his self-conceit and both optics in a little shuffle with a dyspeptic looking cat that he expected would get down on its knees and humbly plead for permission to move out to Mexico with its family.

The house cat is no relation to the cat-o'-nine-tails. Tabby contents himself with one tail, but insists on nine lives. There are instances on record where the entire nine lives have been extinguished at one fell swoop; but recent researches have shown that the veracity of the record aforesaid is as wobbly and uncertain as the hind legs of a newly-arrived red calf, or the choice political *morceau* floating about in the heat and smoke of a vigorous gubernatorial campaign. When the cat is very new; before it has learned that there is just as much fun, and infinitely more profit, in going from door to door in the glad hours of the early morning and sampling the various brands of lacteal fluid furnished by poor but honest milkmen, than in chasing a ball of worsted, it may be safely and successfully suppressed by anchoring it to a two-ton grindstone and gently but firmly dropping it into twelve fathoms of pure spring water; but after its voice has fully developed and it has got thieving down to a fine art it is harder to kill than a mop-peddler or a divorce scandal.

The cat is perhaps the only thing, with the exception of a bunion and a persistent creditor, that an unfortunate man can't manage to lose. Just when you begin to con-

gratulate yourself that Tabby is irrevocably lost you inadvertently step on his tail and he comes back at you with all fours. After you have tried poison, a shotgun, hot water and a brick on a worthless cat that persists in recognizing you as its master, your wife cheers your despairing soul with the suggestion that you lose him. Happy thought! You procure a meal-sack and a horse. After much labor you succeed in inserting Tabby in the sack, at the same time sliding your sore thumb into his mouth to amuse him and give you something to think about and divert your conscience from the shabby trick you are about to play upon a confiding non-English speaking cat. You mount your fiery Bucephalus, take the sack, ride twelve miles in one direction, sixteen in another, describe a few circles and obtuse triangles, tie the cat loose and gallop home. The next morning while you are trying to adjust yourself to the smell of arnica and a cushioned chair and wondering if your liver has not been jolted out of its natural orbit by the unusual exercise, the liveryman calls to inform you that you have ridden his best horse to death and that it will take a round century to square the matter. You protest and he threatens to bring suit and have you indicted for cruelty to animals besides. You weaken, pay the money, go to the dining-room to look for a little comfort on the sideboard,—and find that wretched cat quietly sleeping the sweet sleep of innocence on the hearthrug.

Some people believe that it is bad luck to kill a cat. Perhaps it is. It may also be bad luck to swindle a Yankee tin-peddler in a horse-trade.

PASSING OF PARNELL.

Now that the press has succeeded in breaking the proud heart of Parnell, the Irish patriot; has sickened him with the weight of undeserved reproach; hounded him into a premature grave; cut short the days of his usefulness; robbed Liberty of her chief defender and humanity of its most fearless friend, perchance it will refrain from desecrating his grave; will call off its Gehenna bailiffs and bottle up its moral spleen,—will leave the grandest figure of the Nineteenth Century to the judgment of God and the impartial historian.

No purer patriot than Parnell has arisen in these degenerate days. His voice was ever Freedom's trumpet call; he stood for the weak against the strong; the Right against Might, for his prostrate country against a triumphant crown. He raised the battle cry that echoed round the world,—made Ireland's cause the cause of humanity. Fearless as the Numidian lion, sternly honest as that ill-starred Roman who avowed that he would coin his heart's blood into drachmas rather than wrong the poor; a born leader,—a man who bound to him with links of steel the hearts of all friends of liberty and compelled the respect, nay, the admiration of his bitterest foes, he stood in this age of shams, artificialities and petty policies a veritable Colossus, a bulwark of the People against the encroachments of insolent Power.

Parnell and Irish Home Rule—Liberty, Right, Justice—had become synonyms. He was the Peter-the-Hermit of the new crusade against the insolent Saracen of Prescriptive Right intrenched in centuries of woeful Wrong; and not Europe alone, but the whole majestic world, thrilled with his burning words, inspired by his intrepid example,

was girding on its armor, preparing to follow him not only to Ireland's autonomy, but to the common grave of tyranny,—to the emancipation of mankind.

But suddenly the press, the spies of power, the watchdogs of Plutus, discovered that this man whom an enthusiastic world was well-nigh apotheosizing, was human; that, in fine, he had a mistress, and that the woman was another's wife. Then the very heavens were rent with wild acclaim and the world was pointed to this imperfection in its idol,—as if all other men were modern Josephs, pure as vestal virgins; as if he were the first politician since the dawn of time to fall a victim to the magic cestus of Venus! The “able editors”—many of whom had been fished out of the gutter, had the doors of colored bagnios slammed in their faces—worked themselves up into a fit of moral hysteria; proclaimed that it was simply intolerable that a man who kept a mistress should be allowed to lay his hands upon the “rights” of hereditary robbers; that a wretch who had ruined another's wife should be permitted to lead a crusade for liberty!

The Tory papers of England first took up the cry that Parnell was a moral leper. With them it was purely a political dodge—a trick to break the power of a popular leader. They knew that with his downfall the cause of Irish Home Rule—the sacred cause of human liberty—would be set back a decade; that tyranny would be given a new lease of life; that the day of man's emancipation would be indefinitely postponed, and they persistently belittled and belied him; hired spies to dog his footsteps, bribed human buzzards to betray him. The American press—“the palladium of liberty” caught up the refrain, and from ocean to ocean, around the world, his name was made anathema maranatha!

And what was his offense? That he loved a woman,—had poured the wealth of his impetuous Irish heart out to one who had wedded beneath her. It is not strange that, knowing Parnell, Mrs. O'Shea should love him. To her husband he was as Hyperion to a satyr. Had she been a dull, soulless clod like her husband, Parnell might have crossed her path and left her heart-whole; she might have continued to reverence the clown—have felt only a brief, wondering admiration for Ireland's uncrowned king. Had she been such she would not have interested him, would not have bound him to her side with chains which even his mighty will was powerless to break.

No mortal man does know for a certainty that Mrs. O'Shea was Parnell's mistress. They were much together; they made no attempt to conceal their mutual admiration, and Parnell's foes put upon these facts the very worst possible construction. The husband, his small nature stung to frenzy by jealous pride; painfully conscious of his own inferiority; envious of the greatness of the man who had befriended him; who was making life's bitterest sacrifice for his sake—surrendering to his unworthy embraces his heart's most cherished treasure—was easily persuaded to rush into court with his tale of woe, to help strike down to the dust the woman who was his wife, the mother of his children, and the man who has just died for her sake. Of course the "able editor" credited the story of the self-confessed cuckold! The "able editor" is unable to understand that a man may love a woman without seeking to dishonor her; that there is a Uranian as well as a Pendemian Venus; that with men of Godlike mold Love and Lust are not always synonyms!

Rid of her clownish encumbrance, Parnell hastened to make Mrs. O'Shea his wife; but the press would not suffer the matter to rest so,—would not accept this act as evi-

dence that he at least knew her to be a pure and noble woman, worthy to bear his proud name, but hounded the hapless pair beyond the hymeneal altar; made their dream of love a byword and a reproach, their name a name of scorn. The political exigencies of the Tories required it, and the American press, while loudly proclaiming its independence, its love of liberty and Ireland's holy cause, took up the cowardly and calumnious cry and echoed and re-echoed it until the very wantons were ringing "Kitty's" name into unclean rhyme. Between the hypocritical and canting purists and a foul-minded, sensation-seeking press, not Parnell alone, but the sacred cause of Irish Home Rule, of human liberty, was stabbed to the heart, and the assassins bathe their hands in the red tide and mouthe morals at Heaven as did the envious conspirators when the foremost man of all the world fell bleeding at the base of Pompey's statue.

Granting that Mrs. O'Shea was Parnell's mistress—that he is the father of her younger children—the eye of the all-seeing sun does not look upon one of his contemptuous critics worthy to lay a garland upon his grave. He was true to his friends and his country. Falsehood nor fear lurked a moment in that leonine heart. The whole majestic world was powerless to swerve him to the right or left. When the woman he loved was cast off by the creature she honored with the name of husband; when the prudes and press gang, like unclean goblins, swooped down upon her, tore out her shrinking heart and paraded it before a wanton world on their poisoned spears; Parnell, with a contempt of carping criticism that was God-like, gave her his proud name, gathered her to his heart and, with all his strength shielded her from the putrid waves of vindictive calumny. Had he, like a cringing coward, gone before the world and protested that she was

naught to him; had he turned his back upon the woman who adored him; had he preferred political power to honor he might to-day be poisoning the air with the breath of a hypocrite and poltroon, posing in high places, leading honest men in a bootless battle upon the bulwarks of freedom's foes.

Parnell was honest, truthful, courageous, and such a man the plutocratic press instinctively hates. That he should dare defy its edicts; that he should hold its criticism in contempt; should persist in doing battle for Ireland's honor after it had pointed out a stain, real or imaginary, on his escutcheon; that he should presume to marry a woman upon whose hapless head it had wasted its whole vocabulary of invective and vituperation, drove the press well-nigh frantic, and it redoubled the fury of its assaults.

Parnell fronted the storm of calumny like a lion at bay,—never wavered in his devotion to the woman he adored, but it was too powerful even for him to withstand. Slowly the proud head sank in that unclean sea which now rolls a mighty putrid tide across his grave and breaks upon the unprotected head and bleeding heart of the woman whose only fault, if fault it be, was that she “loved the highest,” the chief of nature’s noblemen; that despite the proud world’s scorn, she clung to him, would not, could not cast him off, blended her soul with his for all eternity.

Parnell fell a victim to the ignorance, the spleen, the vindictive hatred of the press, whose bigotry he had the courage to defy; was struck down by the shafts of calumny hurled by cowards, as basely as was imperial Cæsar by Roman conspirators—in Honor’s name!

What will the historian of a century hence say when he comes to paint the character of Parnell; when he weighs his deeds, his devotion to his country, his sacrifice of eternal fame to guard a loving woman’s name, and then turns

to the musty files of newspapers of these unhappy years and there learns that the "able editor" between puffs of abortion receipts and display ads. of love philters—proclaimed him a moral pariah, a man not fit to lead a political crusade against the landed aristocracy, the titled vermin and shameless cuckolds of England?

* * *

THE "KREUTZER SONATA."

FEW modern books have created so much discussion as Leo Tolstoi's "Kreutzer Sonata." By many it is accepted as scarce second to the Bible,—at least worthy a place on the same shelf with the sermons of Massillon and the philosophy of Aristotle; by others it is tabooed unclean, jejune and demoralizing. The work was first placed in my hands by a lady of culture, who informed me that it was "delightful"; before I could read it an old *roué* assured me that it would pollute the atmosphere of a Portuguese bagnio. I incline to the opinion that the *roué* was nearer right than the lady. The "Kreutzer Sonata" is not a book; it is but an ill-written pamphlet which one may read through at a sitting—if his stomach be particularly strong. Perchance it is unjust to say that it is ill-written; it may be but badly translated. The radacteur was evidently a foreigner, not very familiar with our tongue. Yet he was evidently a slave to his text, and we cannot conceive of him introducing flat contradictions and irreconcilable theories that had no place in the original. Tolstoi's philanthropical labors entitle him to respect. His life is proof positive of his honesty of purpose; but it is not Tolstoi we are now judging, but Tolstoi's pamphlet, the "Kreutzer Sonata."

The story of the marital experience of a wealthy and educated man named Posdnyschew is made the vehicle of Tolstoi's philosophy of life. That philosophy at best is but brutalized Buddhism—and the vehicle even succeeds in disgracing its unsavory burthen. It has not one redeeming feature. Boccaccio tells us some very shady stories; but he does it so artistically that, charmed by his voice, we almost forget to blush. Shakespeare occasionally shocks us by his blunt speech; but he never violates the law of probability and we freely forgive his lapses because we recognize that he wrote in a licentious age. Tolstoi first violates the law of probability by making a man of superior social position pour the story of his unhappy married life, a full confession of his own frailties, dishonor and crime into the ears of an utter stranger on a railway train, then further offends by making him tell it with a brutal bluntness that robs it of every charm but the charm of revolting hideousness. But perchance were the story told in a chaster vein it would give more offense. A slight blow will provoke a man to wrath,—will cause him to strike back; but a heavy one will so stupefy his physical faculties that resistance is impossible. He lies dazed and rather enjoys the pounding that forever disfigures him. So it is with the moral nature of mankind,—and the "Kreutzer Sonata" strikes it with the terrible impact of an avalanche.

But let us turn from the manner of the story to the matter. One can well forgive a clumsy, squeaky cart for offending both ear and eye if it be well laden with Gold of Ophir or Apples of Hesperides. We may well pardon an old man like Tolstoi for speech that makes the courtesan pale beneath her paint if it clothe immortal truth,—if it be pregnant with ideas calculated to lift mankind to higher planes. But what is our reward for two hours' associa-

tion with a garrulous cuckold and cowardly woman-butcher? We learn that "love does not depend on moral preferments, but on sensual intimacy"; that "love, marriage and family ties are all lies"; that "marriage is a vice,"—an "authorization of prostitution"; that reproduction is "unnatural" and that the human race should seek complete extinction by strict continency. The Buddhist would attain Nirvana, the suppression of the ego, by a faultless life, or by a series of lives that carry him up and up until he blends with Brahma. Tolstoi would secure the "unification of humanity"—which I take to be the same thing—by allowing the race to perish from the earth. With Gautama life is an evidence of sin in a former state; with Tolstoi it is an evidence of sin, of bestiality on the part of parents.

We must accept the experience of Posdnyschew and his wife as—in Tolstoi's view—a fair exposé of married life, else degrade the Russian sage to the level of the sensational story writer. If this couple was not intended to be typical then the "Kreutzer Sonata" becomes a pointless novel and of a very indifferent grade. Taking the couple as typical, we learn that wifely virtue does not exist; that children are unwelcome accidents; that a mother's love scarce rises to the level of that of "a bitch for her pups"; that conjugal felicity cannot outlast lust; that dishonor is the inevitable portion of the benedict. Jealousy is also inseparable from the married state—and such jealousy! Posdnyschew is ever torn by the green-eyed monster, but it is not loss of love he fears. He has already come to understand that love is a poetical lie. It is not dread that someone will supplant him in his wife's affections, that another face will haunt her dreams, that the incense of her heart will be offered at another shrine that causes him to suffer hell-pains, for he is satisfied that a woman must of

necessity dislike her lord whoever he may chance to be. It is not unrequited love that causes him to gnaw his lip, for he despises the mother of his children right heartily. It is the awful fear that someone will get possession of his female property and misuse it that transforms him into a raging demon. He regards every dashing gentleman who comes near his house with the same feeling that a famished tiger would a leopard that dared cast a longing glance at the toothsome kid which the former considered his lawful prize! He has no confidence whatever in his wife, and goes scurrying half across a continent to catch her in a crime—and is not disappointed.

This may be a faithful portrait of married life in Russia for aught I know. If so, Tolstoi should have credit for correctly diagnosing the disease, even if his remedy is worse than worthless. We can well understand how perverted Buddhism could become popular in Russia, where to the mighty multitude life is a joyless burden; but we search in vain for the "Kreutzer Sonata's" success in our own country, where simple existence is a joy and the public heart beats high with hope. Perhaps its popularity was but a fad like the pug dog craze. Perchance our people, surfeited with philosophism and profitless theological hair-splitting; disgusted with Della-Cruscan poetry and nauseated with the inane nothings of modern novelists, hungered for something bizarre, as the epicure will occasionally crave sauer-kraut and hard-boiled eggs. It may be that barring the "Kreutzer Sonata" out of the mails made the American people determined to read the worthless rubbish, and to like it even if it tasted like assafetida stewed with stale pork. It is said that the Scotch-Irish are the contrariest animals on earth, and that breed of enthusiastic rebels has put its imprint broad and deep on this

great Yankee nation—as the Prohibitionists long ago found to their sorrow.

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PRICE'S PREDICAMENT.

WARREN E. PRICE, editor of the *A.P.A. Magazine*, of San Francisco, the leading journal of the politico-religious dark-lantern conspirators, has just been sentenced to eighteen months penal servitude and to pay a fine of \$500 for sending obscene matter through the mails. Price appears to be a thrifty-minded cuss, for in addition to editing the great organ of the Apes—the sewer through which most of the bigotry and bile of those fanatics and fools pours out upon the public—he conducted a book-store which served as a “fence” for contraband art and libidinous literature. One would suppose that such merchandise would be kept sub-rosa and displayed only to the aphrodisiacal dames and habitués of the Chinese opium dens; but it developed at the trial that Price had actually sent circulars to school children, calling attention to his unequaled stock of moral corruption. And Price, be it remembered, is one of the high muck-a-mucks of those tearful patriots and pious parrots who are “rallying around the little red schoolhouse” to protect it from the corruptive influence of the Papists! “Angels and ministers of grace defend us!” Set the wolf to guard the lamb, the jackal to keep watch and ward among our sacred dead, and the Apes to protect our innocents! Nor does the attempt of Price to corrupt the school children measure the deep damnation of this moral pervert. It was proved that he had betrayed to the police other dealers in like literature that he might monopolize the sale of such filth

in San Francisco. There may be truth among pirates and honor among thieves, but we look in vain for either among those legitimate descendants of Gulliver's unclean yahoos, the professional Apes. While corrupting the children Price vented his rheum upon the garments of the brides of God. Page after page of his paper was devoted to the most bestial abuse of the Roman Catholic sisterhood—to branding the inmates of convents as but little better than bawds. I am not surprised that he broke into prison. A man capable of such calumnies as he emitted month after month is equal to any crime requiring no physical courage. Instead of being incarcerated in a well-regulated penitentiary, he should have been hanged in a hair halter and his foul carcass left to fatten kites. Doubtless some honest and earnest people identify themselves with the A.P.A.—ignorance is easily misled by designing demagogues; but I have yet to learn of an Ape leader in whom a cathode ray would discover a good moral character. Warren E. Price and ex-Priest Slattery are fair samples of the fellows who make A.P.Apeism a profession and fatten at the expense of fools. Price is in a federal prison for an offense worse than murder, that of corrupting the very babes for boodle—an infamy that would crimson with shame the brazen brow of Pandarus and add new obloquy to the detested name of Tarquin. Slattery has gone, whither God only knows, and even the Devil doesn't care. He seems to have crawled off the earth after his Texas itinerary, in company with the alleged ex-nun whom he was carting around the country to pander to the prurient appetites of off-color dames by relating naughty tales of desiring nuns and accommodating priests. Slattery didn't get into the penitentiary; but he got out of Waco p. d. q.—and he'll never come back. He came as the avowed exponent of "muscular Christianity," and promised a congregation—com-

posed chiefly of women—that he'd do something awfully dreadful to any editor who “dared assail his moral character.” Then he undertook to make the same kind of play at a stag party, but didn't succeed. “His coward lips did from their color fly.” He meekly took the fighting lie and canine epithet, then folded his tent like the Arab and made an inglorious sneak. The Apes must indeed be proud of their spokesman. An “American Protective Association” with Price bearing aloft its gonfalon and Slattery enunciating its principles! Think of men, born in Old Glory's sacred shadow, trailing in the wake of a brace of he-bawds who peddle obscene literature to babes and seek to corral the dirty dollar by defaming “The Angels of Buena Vista,” those heroic women who are ever ready to do battle to the death with “the pestilence that walketh in darkness.” Nor are these bipedal brutes, these professional panders to the prurient, these assassins of reputation, these high-binders in the world of morals, the exception to the rule—the black sheep of the A.P.A. hierarchy. Every professional exponent of A.P.Apeism is either a shameless political adventurer or graceless mountebank who's in the unclean business for boodle. Pick up any paper published in the interest of the catacombers and you'll find the same base innuendoes aimed at the sacerdotal order that has been glorified by a Père Marquette and hallowed by a Father Damien—the same cowardly and unclean flings at consecrated women who would go to Price himself, and minister to him with more than motherly tenderness, were he stricken with the black death and deserted by those to his heart most dear. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” The fruits of A.P.Apeism are hate and discord that may yet flame forth in civil strife and desolate the land. The fruits of the Catholic orders are love and charity to all, regardless of race or

creed, glory or shame. Even a Slattery cannot fall so low that the Sisters of Charity would decline to succor him in his hour of distress. I am no sectarian; I care naught for the Catholic creed. Nor am I fighting the battles of the priesthood—its members are usually able to give a good account of themselves; but when men professing to be countrymen of mine—guardians of the flag of my fathers—assail with vindictive calumny women whose mission is one of mercy, I long for the power to transform the English tongue into the writhen bolts of Jove and hurl the cowardly and unclean curs to the profoundest depths of Hell.

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THE JUNIUS LETTERS.

FOR more than a century distinguished critics have been striving to determine the authorship of "The Letters of Junius"; but their conclusions have been so contradictory that they have but whetted public curiosity by deepening the mystery. For my humble part, I feel like characterizing the controversy as "Much Ado About Nothing." I care as little about the authorship of the Junius letters as I do about the slugger of the immortal Billy Patterson. A dozen Englishmen of more or less worth or worthlessness have been suspected of writing the Junius letters. Dr. Johnson tried hard to saddle the offense on an Irishman, Edmund Burke. Sir Joshua Reynolds thought Samuel Dyer the author of the Letters and that he was assisted by Burke and Burke's brainy cousin, while Macaulay thought the doubtful honor due Sir Philip Francis. Nearly every prominent English politician of the latter half of the last century has been accused of being Junius. I have no candidate for the crown of shame. I am certain,

however, that Edmund Burke did not write them. I can no more conceive of Edmund Burke writing the Junius letters than I can conceive of Gladstone writing a penny dreadful or a Houston *Post* editorial. I only wonder that he did not cane Dr. Johnson for coupling his name with the pseudonym of the unknown coward. While by no means certain that Sir Philip Francis did write The Junius Letters, I think, if the estimates of his character which have come down to us are trustworthy, that he may have done so. We are told that he was a man of no extraordinary ability and that he was "arrogant, insolent and malevolent." Such a man was Junius.

No writer of which history preserves a record has been so generally overestimated. From the appearance of his first letters in the *Public Advertiser* in 1769, to the present hour, he has been generally regarded as a literary marvel; yet I will undertake to find among his British and French contemporaries at least a half dozen writers who were not only his masters in general excellence, but his superiors in his particular provinces of satire and invective. He was a clever writer, but not a great one. If asked why he has been regarded for more than a century as a genius of the highest order, I must confess that I do not know. I can no more account for the reputation of Junius than I can for the popularity of Talmage. I can easily understand why he created a tremendous sensation in England a hundred-odd years ago. It was a season of political unrest, and Junius was a political writer who was familiar with the inner works of the administrations he attacked, the carefully guarded secrets of those of the opposite party, the grinning skeletons, both public and private, of those people he desired to hold up to scorn. His letters were, therefore, a series of bombshells of terrific explosive force. They would have created a furore

had they been written in the jargon of the cockpit. There was something uncanny, almost terrifying about those Letters. The author was enshrouded in mystery and appeared omnipresent. The whispered consultations in the king's closet, the carefully guarded plans of the political cabal, the mutual confidence of friends, the very thoughts of the ministers were to him as an open book. He was always "on the inside!" He was the prince of spies! In these days a reporter with such a nose for news would be worth a thousand dollars a week! But I suspect that Junius' sensational "spreads" were purchased by the betrayal of sacred trusts,—and it does not require a very high order of intellect to perform such feats. That Junius created a sensation I do not wonder; but it does amaze me that he was not forgotten almost as soon as he ceased to be a potent factor in British politics.

The Junius letters are worth to us the face value of their literary and historical merit. The first is little, the last is less. His facts are so distorted as to be misleading, and his style is much more polished than elegant. The author is continually complaining of the immense amount of labor expended upon his Letters; yet they are in every way inferior to many of Dana's hasty editorials or Halstead's bitter screeds. Some months ago J. B. McCullagh, editor of the *Globe-Democrat*, got into a controversy with Father Phelan, editor of the *Catholic Watchman*, and they treated each other to daily "roasts" in every way superior to the labored satires of Junius. Pagan Bob Ingersoll took a hand, and dictated an "interview" in a few minutes that would shame anything Junius ever did in a month.

One of Junius's bitterest controversies was with Sir William Draper. Although Sir William made little pretension to literary excellence, being a soldier by profes-

sion, he succeeded in holding his own pretty well against the great unknown. Nor did Junius have an easy victory when he tried his shafts on a little parson named Horne. While ever ready to amuse himself with the unskilled in literary fence,—with parsons and politicians and soldiers —he declined to take up the gage of battle thrown down by the redoubtable Dr. Johnson. His declination to measure blades with the worthy Doctor is really the only thing he ever did to prove himself a wise man. Had he been a fool he would have rushed in and been mercilessly slaughtered. He was wise enough to know that he was outclassed, and he made an inglorious sneak.

Junius was as much afraid of Dr. Johnson's caustic pen as he was of Sir William Draper's sword,—and he took precious good care to avoid both. Neither as author, politician nor man is Junius to be commended. His political foresight was faulty, his judgment of men and measures so warped by prejudice as to be worse than worthless. He was ever magnifying mole-hills into mountains, and mistaking matters of tremendous importance for trifles. His faith was fickle as his judgment was faulty and he denounced men whom he had once fawned upon and glorified those whom he had most bitterly condemned. Junius was a good hater, and a persistent, uncompromising hater is usually a faithful, self-sacrificing friend; but this is only true where hatred is grounded in reason. Junius hated without cause and persecuted without excuse. Lawyers and Scotchmen were his especial aversion. He had no particular objection to being called a coward or a liar, but the fear that someone would mistake him for an attorney embittered even the joy he experienced in railing at his betters. In his view all Scotchmen must perforce be Shylocks and traitors and have the itch. He pretended to love and reverence the king and all the royal

family; yet because he could not secure the dismissal of Lord Bute, a Scotchman, he branded the queen dowager as his mistress. I can account for his bitter hatred of the Scotch on no other hypothesis than that some dashing Caledonian had cuffed his ears or kissed his wife. I will dismiss him with a shaft from Dr. Johnson's bow: "Let us abstract from his wit the vivacity of insolence, and draw from his efficacy the sympathetic favor of plebeian malignity: I do not say that we shall leave him nothing; but if we leave him only his merit, what will be his praise?"

* * *

HER BEAUTIFUL EYES.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, the poetical ass with the three-story name, which he invariably inflicts upon the public in full, has broken out again. He grasps his cornstalk fiddle and twitters:

"Oh; her beautiful eyes! They are as blue as the dew
On the violet's bloom when the morning is new,
And the light of their love is the gleam of the sun
O'er the meadows of spring where the quick shadows
run.
As the morn shifts the mists and the clouds from
the skies—
So I stand in the dawn of her beautiful eyes."

Beautiful! Slides off slick as grease! But we are pained, Jamesie, absolutely pained to learn that "the light of their love" is intermittent. But perchance you couldn't stand to have the calcium turned on all the time. We learn from the following stanza that even a semi-occasional burst

of splendor is too much for you,—causes you to wilt like turnip tops in a green-grocer's window:

“ And her beautiful eyes are as midday to me,
When the lily-bell bends with the weight of the bee,
And the throat of the thrush is a-pulse in the heat,
And the senses are drugged with the subtle and
sweet
And delirious breaths of the air's lullabies—
So I swoon in the noon of her beautiful eyes.”

Ah, God! a little ice water and a fan, please. Chafe his throbbing temples with a Posey county corncob, and if that doesn't bring him 'round slap a “ half-chawed chaw o' nateral leaf ” in his left eye! Ah, that fixes him! He revives, he totters to his feet, he smites his breast, he gropes hither and yon in his delirious ecstasy. Once more he speaks, and his words are hoarse with the passion that causes him to wobble in his walk and catch his perfumed breath on the instalment plan:

“ Oh, her beautiful eyes! They have smitten mine own
As a glory glanced down from the glare of the
throne;
And I reel, and I falter and fall as afar
Fell the shepherds that looked on the mythical star,
And yet dazed in the tidings that bade them arise,
As I grope through the night of her beautiful eyes.”

Well, dodgast our fool luck, he's squatted again! Stun-blind and digging at the roots of the daisies with his finger nails like Romeo pawing up the pave in Friar Laurence's cell! Knocked out and completely done for by a glance from a girl who may have holes in her stockings and a

hiatus in her head! Perhaps she was cross-eyed and that tangled him up. We hope the smitten Hoosier will recover the use of both legs and eyes,—that his falling sickness may not become chronic. Perhaps he can persuade his star-eyed charmer to wear green goggles or only squint at him through a piece of smoked glass. He might try splitting a thousand blackjack fence rails as a bracer. By the time he finished the task he would probably tumble to the fact that he-poets-of-passion are not in demand. Anacreon was the last one that could get the erotic jimmams without also getting guyed. Somebody should take the whole tribe of he-warblers aside and inform them that writing poetry—even good poetry, without any love swoons in it—is devilish poor business for grown-up men. If the poetic muse will persist in haunting a fellow he is excusable for occasionally breaking into song while he draws a fat bacon rind down the shining blade of his buck-saw; but he should not get into the habit of it. When a sure-enough man cannot do anything but warble he needs medical treatment.

* * *

ISRAEL AS IT IS.

THERE was a time when to have sprung from Judah's consecrated loins was better than to be born a king; when the embattled hosts of Israel made the world tremble before their martial might, and men turned for knowledge to Zion's holy hill as the helianthus turns its face to the rising sun.

When our ancestors were but brutal barbarians, clad in skins stripped with sharp stones from beasts scarcely less ferocious; dwelling in caves and subsisting on roots and raw meat; with no aspirations above the crudest creature

comforts, no conception of immortality, no dream of man's high destiny, Solomon was making silver as the stones in the streets of Jerusalem; the Jews were worshiping the "Lord of Hosts," framing those laws which are to-day the basic principle of civilization, quelling semi-barbarous people with the sword, computing the procession of the planets and weaving into the woof of human history those imperishable gems of poesy and philosophy which the world's wisest say transcend the genius of mortal man and must, perchance, be the gracious gift of God.

Yet for twenty centuries we have regarded the Jew with suspicion, treated him as if he were of an inferior race; as though in his bosom beat the heart of an inhuman harpy, in his veins coursed the accursed blood of the wolf. For twenty centuries the Jew has suffered "the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely"—has been the target at which the finger of scorn was ever pointed; the buffet of dissolute princes and purse-proud potentates; the undeserving victim of the blind wrath of the proletarian rabble; the mark at which sectarian hate and unreasoning bigotry have leveled their most vindictive shafts; despoiled, outraged, beaten with many stripes; expatriated, driven hither and thither, finding no rest for his weary feet in a world which his wisdom has done so much to humanize, to which he has given the happiness here and hope hereafter.

Is it possible that the Jew, who is of the blood and bone of the patriarchs and prophets, of Moses the Medianite, and those warlike Maccabees before whom the fierce Syrian soldiery fled terror-stricken from Judea's hills, is a creature fit only for our contumely, a dog to be spurned by "Christian" feet? that the children of men who, cooped up in one quarter of their beloved city and dying of starvation, defended their holy temple against Titus the Terrible and the intrepid sons of all-conquering Rome until the

sacred pile was dripping with blood and ablaze with the legionary's brand, but merit the sneers of a people whose ancestors a few generations ago were plowing the Northern seas as pirates in quest of plunder, or participating in the bloody and brutal rites of the Druidical superstition?

To deny that there is a widespread antipathy to the Jew were as fatuous as to deny the existence of the sun. In most parts of the United States this antipathy is latent; but in Europe it not only manifests itself in legislation and social ethics, but frequently bursts forth in deeds of desperate violence and inhumanity on the part of the people. Even while I write, in "Christian" Russia the Jews are being despoiled and outraged—their homes given to the flames, their savings to the plunderer, their daughters to the ravisher, their throats to the knife! And the rest of the so-called Christian world mildly protests; intimates that, perhaps, after all, the Jew has a soul, at least flesh and bone, and may suffer somewhat.

While the Tsar's brutal soldiery—aided by the volunteer efforts of the Russian peasantry and such other people as consider the killing of a creditor the easiest way to discharge an honest debt—are hurrying the Jews across the frontiers, the civilized world is firing whereases, resolutions, remonstrances signed by aldermen and fledgling D.D.'s, silly tirades by alleged "able editors" and other trifling nonsense and cheap balderdash at his "Most Christian Majesty"; then, convinced that it has done its duty, it goes home to dinner—perhaps with a half defined feeling that nobody has any business to be a Jew! Were the people of any other race subjected to such barbarous brutality, the Christian world, so-called, would demand that it cease instantly, and demand it sword in hand.

The cause of this prejudice against the Jew, which appears to be bred in the very bone of "Christian" people

of Indo-European blood, it were indeed difficult to determine. Scarcely a count in the formidable indictment which has hung over him for a hundred generations like a veritable sword of Damocles, will stand analysis. It is charged that the Jew will not intermarry with other races. In God's name, cannot a man choose a wife to suit himself without having a whole majestic universe snarling at his heels? If the dark-eyed daughters of Judah prefer their kinsmen to those who from time immemorial have persecuted them, cannot a professedly chivalrous world leave them free to choose? Is it at all strange that a people whose blood for two thousand years has been kept free from taint, should decline to pour it into that great red tide which has greedily absorbed every clean and unclean thing with which it has come in contact, whether Goth or Moor, British barbarian or American red Indian, and is now blending slowly but surely with the Ethiop and Australian Bushman?

But while the incongruous and oftentimes unclean mixture of races in Europe, and especially in America, where the great-grandsons of Charlemagne's paladins wed the great-granddaughters of expatriated sneak thieves and lousy Indian squaws—where the blood of the Capulets mingles with that of the Cades—is of itself sufficient to give pause to those who trace their lineage through God-fearing men and chaste women back to the days of David, it is not the only nor the chief cause why the Jews maintain that solidarity which is at once the wonder of the world and the burthen of its never-ceasing jeremiad. Their religion tends to make the Jews chary of intermarriage with non-conformists; but the great determining cause of their exclusiveness is the social and political ostracism to which they have for so many centuries been generally subjected by Europe, and which occasionally shows its ugly front, like

Discord at Peleus' nuptial rites, in free America, where anything that can dodge the gallows or the jail for one and twenty years is called a sovereign,—where we buy with our millions the bastard spawn of kings' courtesans as husbands for our daughters!

The Jew was driven into trade and money-changing by the edicts of Christian potentates forbidding him to acquire title to land. In his own country before the diaspora his chief occupation was agriculture, and the law of his religion did not permit him to lend at interest for the relief of distress. Money is power, even in the hands of the Jew, and it is small wonder that when he found it his only friend in a world of fanatical foes—the only weapon with which he could hope to win his way—in sheer self-defense he diligently sought to acquire all of it possible. Money to the Jew has ever meant much more than creature comforts; it has meant sword and shield, bulwark and bastion—the magic wand that metamorphoses the Medusa-face of sectarian hate into that of the oily and unctuous hypocrite.

It is small wonder that in money matters the Jew has become preternaturally keen; small wonder that in dealing with his enemies, actual or potential, he should prove an exacting creditor—should acquire an unenviable reputation among his hereditary critics for sordidness and “sharp practice.” But the avarice, so-called, of the Jew, is the result, not the cause of centuries of political and social ostracism. To abuse the Jew for “getting gain” were like throwing a man into a tempestuous sea and cursing him for grasping desperately at whatever may promise preservation. Numerically too weak to force recognition of his right with the naked sword, the Jew forges his weapon of fine gold and with it makes the proudest of Christian potentates pay him homage with their lips while they curse him in their hearts.

So far from being a stony-hearted, avaricious people, as popularly supposed, the Jews are naturally the most sympathetic and generous in the world. Who ever heard of a Jew begging bread, going to the almshouse or suffering for creature comforts, while other members of his race—even though strangers—knowing of his necessities, had a crust to share or a dollar to divide? And yet we “Christians,” who prate of our liberality and pose before the world as paragons of philanthropy, oftentimes allow our old mothers to go “on the county” while we go on a champagne “jag”; permit our brothers to eat the bitter bread of a stranger’s contemptuous charity, while we parade as public-spirited citizens! Very remarkable is it that while our relatives are usually the last in the world we desire to embark in business with, the Jew prefers his near kinsman to all others. We know our brethren—know that they will rob and betray, “bullyrag” and beat at every opportunity. The Jew knows his brethren and trusts his fortune to their hands without a tremor!

Avaricious? Miserly? Little-souled? Mean? Thou fool! The Jew is the most liberal money-spender in the world. He calls for the best of everything and pays for it like a prince! Did you ever hear that a Jew miser starved to death in the midst of his millions? That one of the race of Judah ever perished for lack of medical attendance which he was too penurious to pay for? Yet such things are of almost daily occurrence in this Christian land! But the victim of the unholy lust for gain is never, no, never, a Jew. He may hide his heart in his money-bags, but never follows the example of Pedro Garcia and keeps his soul there also.

In every country where the Jew has been accorded the political privileges of other people, he has proven himself a public-spirited citizen, and his subscriptions to enter-

prises to promote the public welfare have been paid promptly and without protest. While the Christian has given his "moral support," the Jew has gone down into his pockets and planked down the wherewithal that "makes the world go round."

Another count in the indictment is that the Jew never really identifies himself with the country in which he resides—never becomes a patriot; that he is eager to enjoy the rights of citizenship while shirking its responsibilities—anxious for the protection of a flag he will not lift a hand to defend. This is, perhaps, the most remarkable of all the multifarious phases in which ingrained prejudice and hereditary hatred has bodied itself forth. Although the Jewish contingent in our eleemosynary institutions and penitentiaries is practically nil, they are largely supported by taxes paid by the Jewish people. True, the Jew is seldom the central figure at party primaries; his voice rarely adds to the discordant din of partisan polemics; he is seldom seen on the stump at cross-roads or the beer-barrel in barrooms, telling his fellow-citizens what to do to be saved. He rarely makes of himself a moral bankrupt or noisy nuisance trying to capture an office with small salary and large stealage:—but he can generally be counted upon to cast his ballot for the "conservative" candidate and pay his taxes promptly. Furthermore, when he finds that country in danger which treats him a few degrees better than a dog, he can be depended upon to risk his life and fortune in its defense. Compared with percentage of population, the Jewish contingent in the Federal and Confederate forces was very large, and precious few circumcised soldiers were arrested for bounty-jumping, reprimanded for cowardice or court-martialed for desertion. Many Jews rose to military distinction during the Civil War, and the descendants of Miles Standish, Mad

Anthony Wayne, Light-Horse Harry Lee and Francis Marion were proud to call them their commanders. Who can forget the services to the South of Judah Benjamin, or the heroic fortitude with which the Jews stood by the failing Co-federacy "with their fortunes, their lives and their sacred honor"? But for the financial aid of the Northern Jews when the tide of battle appeared to be turning against the Federal Government and the mighty structure seemed tottering to its fall; when the British lion was crouching for a spring, and even France looked askance at the wounded eagle, the mailed hand of the mighty North would have fallen nerveless as that of a frightened child, the stars and bars would float south of the Ohio, and that scourge of God, Negro slavery, be fixed on this fair land forever.

Since the Jews became numerous in Europe and America there has been scarce a battlefield not dyed with Israel's consecrated blood; scarcely a military maneuver not paid for from Jewish purses; scarce a throne not gilded by Jewish industry; scarce a printed page upon which, directly or indirectly, they did not set their seal; scarce a poet who did not borrow their musical metaphors; scarce an orator who did not tacitly acknowledge in every instance that but for the Jews he would have nothing to say.

From the loins of Judah have sprung more intellectual giants than any other race or nation can boast. The roster of those who have added to the world's wisdom, to human happiness, stretches in an unbroken line from the present hour back to the dawn of human history. Did you ever stop to reflect that Spinoza, the prince of philosophers, Mendelssohn, the master of the world of music, and a host of others whom we revere as something almost more than mortal, not to mention the Christ, whom we worship as a God, were all of the race which you profess to despise?

The cause of the prejudice against the Jews is multifarious. He is emphatically a child of the Orient—as different from the Occidentals as though native of another planet. The brawny and intensely practical Scotch Highlander and the mild-eyed melancholy lotus-eater could scarce be further apart from an ethnological standpoint than the Jews and the Indo-Germanic people. Race, political and religious differences bred antipathy long before the destruction of the Second Temple. Then as the Jews dispersed over Europe, came the ill-wind of business rivalry, the hatred of the debtor for the creditor class, followed by the fierce fires of a religious bigotry that made of mediæval Europe a hell upon which Caius Caligula might have looked with horror. In those fierce Gehenna-fires were forged the chains that still hold the Christian mind in thrall; in those dark days when intolerance was lord paramount, when superstition was the handmaiden of religion and the Christian cavalier drove into the ground his sword, stained with the blood of non-conforming maidens, and fell upon his knees before the reeking cross that formed the hilt; when with whip and faggot, the thumb-screw and the wheel, fanatics dragged men to the throne of Grace, or drove them to the Devil, the vulpine instinct of the Jew attained, perforce, an abnormal development, distrust of those not of his race and religion became hereditary. He found the world against him, and it is his misfortune, not his fault, that his hand is against the world.

That the spirit of the Jews has not been utterly crushed by twenty centuries of systematic oppression; that they have not withered beneath the terrible baptism of fire, degenerated into contemptible spiritless lazzaroni; that the united world has signally failed to trample them beneath its brutal feet and keep them there; that despite two thousand years of trial and temptation, of calumny, intimida-

tion, of the most brutal outrages recorded in Time's too unhappy annals, the daughters of Judah are to-day the paragons of purity, as they have ever been of beauty, proclaims to every man with eyes to see and brain to understand, that the Jews are one of the greatest races, one of the grandest peoples that ever appeared upon the earth; that the Lord of Hosts was infinitely wiser than we when He made His covenant with them and swore by His own bright essence increate, that through good and ill, through weal and woe, He would be their God and they should be His people.

* * *

THE REPUBLIC IN DANGER.

WILL THE EAGLE CEASE TO SCREAM?

How long will the American Union endure? It is customary to speak and act as though it could only end with Time; as if nothing short of the final crash of the Universe rushing back into the formless real of Chaos and Night could possibly subvert it.

And yet it is but a new thing—a great straddling political calf standing doubtfully upon its four wobbly legs, the bones of which are still but gristle, the tendons mere fatty strings. Thus it stands, fronting Time; foolishly imagining itself a winged-lion or hippogriff, one of the few immortal things that were not born to die. Really, if it meet with no mishap until its bones have time to harden—until its principles still in a nebulous state are finally fixed—it will doubtless become, if not an immortal winged-creature, at least a fine horned-bull, able to paw up the dirt and bellow with the proudest of bovines. But infant governments, like other juveniles, have their perils to pass

through; their colics and cramps, measles and mumps, and it is a long cry from the baptismal font to the *toga virilis*—from wobbly foolish calfhood to mastership of the herd. It were well, perhaps, not to forget that other republics have filled earth and Heaven with their self-glorification and boasts of immortality, and then, quietly or otherwise, meandered out into the great inane, leaving behind as measurements but a few scraps of half intelligible history, of interest chiefly to the foolish antiquary.

“The soul politic having departed, what can follow but that the body politic be decently interred, to avoid putrescence?”

We are no longer American citizens, brothers with com-mutual interests; we are capitalists and laborers, farmers and manufacturers—each class fighting desperately not to promote the general welfare, but its own selfish interest. We are divided into classes-social and classes-industrial, and the lines of demarcation are becoming ever more strongly drawn. Patriotism has been throttled by greed, fraternity by jealousy. We no longer send our best men to Congress. We do not ask what a candidate can do to make the Union stronger; we do not inquire what he knows of the science of government—but rather how deep a haul he can make on the treasury for the special behoof of our section; how large an appropriation he can secure for the “improvement” of intermittent creeks and impossible harbors; for the erection of useless public buildings; how much “protection” he can secure for our products at the expense of the rest of the nation; how many fat federal offices he can distribute among us. We are after spoils; we have made of our votes levers to pry open the public treasury; we will follow any demagogue if he but lead us to the flesh-pots, reckless of the future. Where is hope? What is to prevent our plunging headlong into

that mad vortex of ruin, temporal and spiritual, to which we are hastening with constantly accelerating speed? To what political party shall be turn for salvation? There are but two possessing power for good or ill, and, like two bad roads, if we take the one we are apt to regret the other. Principles? What principles does either party possess that it will not willingly sacrifice to secure the mystic sesame that makes the doors of the public treasury fly open?

Is it possible that co-operation in government, as in business, is foredoomed to failure—that here as elsewhere it is true that “too many cooks spoil the broth”? Or will the mad wreck and ruin that must inevitably follow this dividing of the national house against itself but prove a purgation by fire, from which representative government will rise, phoenix-like, purer and stronger? We shall see what we shall see.

Those who fear the downfall of the Republic through so-called centralization tendencies are but striving desperately to frighten themselves with a spectre of their own contriving. The danger lies not in a strong central government, but in a weak one. It is not “imperialism” we have to fear so much as the State sovereignty hydra, which was scotched, not killed, by the Lernean serpent slayers of ’61-5. This double sovereignty of State and Nation is a weak spot in the pillar of American government, one pregnant with danger. It made the war of 1812 a pitiful farce—would have given us a shameful defeat within the memory of men now living had Mexico bred true fighting men instead of beggars and lice. It has several times threatened the integrity of the Union and once cost a million precious lives. It has on divers occasions very nearly embroiled us in war with foreign powers, and may do so at

any time—then handicap us, as it has ever done, in the hour of peril! Truly was it said of old that the house divided against itself cannot stand. So long as these United States of America are a congeries of Nations instead of a Nation—with one supreme head to whom all petty governors must bow—it will be so divided, ready to melt into nothingness.

Pessimism? Not a bit of it. A pessimist, with an eye to see and mental apparatus to digest such pabulum as the visual nerve provides, would not believe that the rickety pile we name American Union—and brag about and rob on every possible occasion—could stand upright a single year; could sustain the faintest adverse wind from any quarter of the compass whatsoever. Forty old separate and distinct buildings of different styles of architecture huddled together helter-skelter under one rickety patch-work roof, hovering aloft with painful effort, pulled at, even shot at, the props all rotten and worm-eaten—the fact scarce concealed by liberal paint and cheap gilding.

That the rebellion of 1861 did not bring that composite covering down with a crash; that it did not tear apart those grotesquely grouped Nations and scatter them to the four winds of Heaven or hades, was but an accident, happy or otherwise, as you chance to view it. The people of the North and South were at swords' points; a collision was inevitable—cupping had become a necessity. The very fact that the South was determined to get out of the Union made the North equally as determined that, cost what it might, the Union should be preserved intact. It was not that the people of the North loved the Union more, but that they loved the South less, that gave vigor, even virulence, to their war cry of “the Union forever,” with hurrah boys attachment. They “had it in for the nigger drivers” and were only too happy when the latter gave them an ex-

cuse to shuck their linen. Really, it was not so much a question of whether the Union should be preserved as whether John Brown's soul should be permitted to go meandering musically on, that caused the Northerner to gird sword on thigh and go marching from Atlanta to the sea—doing his share meanwhile to solve the negro problem from an ethnological as well as a political standpoint.

Now that the negro can knock off work without asking leave; can give over petit for grand larceny whenever he can get elected to office—and John Brown's soul goes marching unchallenged—Mason and Dixon's semi-mythical line is slowly but surely fading from a grand canyon to a mere scratch in the ground; but a new sectional line is being drawn between the East and the West that bids fair to make no end of trouble in the near future. The most dangerous of all lines, however, is that being drawn ever broader and deeper between the capitalist and the laborer; or, to dodge the hair-splitting of political economists, between Dives and Lazarus—between the man who has millions in excess of his needs and the man whose chief capital is an active appetite. It is along this line that the first sputtering of that revolution which is destined to try to the uttermost our present form of government will first be heard—nay, is even now audible. This is a revolution, rebellion or what you will, that no marching to the sea, fall of Richmond and the like will put down; one there is no force able to cope withal. Once well under way, it will run its course; no flag-flaunting, resolution by prominent citizens, enactment of Congress—not even an appropriation will suffice to check it. The only safety for our established forms and formulas lies in their quiet but rapid metamorphosis. Our wise men, if they would "save the country," must no longer waste time trying to prop up

buildings that are even now tumbling down; but break the force of the fall the best they may, clear away the rubbish and supervise the erection of more useful edifices. They must not seek so much to repress the gathering storm as to give it direction, that it destroys not the useful with the useless.

The workingman must be made to feel that he, too, has a country and that it is in very truth "the land of the free and the home of the brave"—of men courageous enough to say to the employing capitalist: We, too, are men like thee; we are your fellow-countrymen, not your serfs. Our labor you can only secure by giving therefor a just proportion of its product; our votes—our manhood—you can in nowise command. These are not for sale—or rent.

One great trouble with our government is that it is becoming too complex, too redundant. There is danger of its breaking down with its own weight. We must study to simplify it, to dispense with many of our present offices, instead of creating more. The number of our tax-eaters is becoming alarming. They already constitute a vast nonproductive army; their support is becoming a serious drain upon American industry. We have too many laws and law-makers; too much red tape that hinders rather than helps Justice in the manipulation of her sword and scales. Government, municipal, State or National, is a corporation in which every citizen is a stockholder, sharing in the gains or losses. The public service should, therefore, be reduced to a purely business basis. The demagogue who mounts dry-goods box or editorial tripod and prates about rotation in office should be gagged with his own stupid nescience. When we secure faithful and efficient servants we must keep them as long as possible instead of turning them drift to make place at the public teat for partisan

“workers.” The idea that public treasure is legitimate spoil must be weeded out. It is a rank, infectious growth that is rapidly strangling all that is good in our boasted representative government.

* * *

A LITERARY RARA AVIS.

IT IS customary in American journalism to tickle those who tickle you and “roast those who hop gaily astride your celluloid collar. Journalistic complaints are usually paid only on the reciprocal plan. This is another humbug for the iconoclastic hammer, and for that reason I feel it my duty to take a gentle fall out of the St. Louis *Mirror*. The fact that it has seen fit to place The ICONOCLAST up among the literary pictures, cuts no ice. *Amicus Reedy, sed magis amica veritas*, which, I learn from the butt-end of the dictionary, is equivalent to saying that Billy is my friend, but occasionally gets off his base. He appears to have taken every province of knowledge for his own, and he is no amateur in any. He has the conciseness of “Little Mack,” the erudition of Dana and the happy half-French style that so long made the editorial page of the Washington *Post* a bouquet of interrectual rainbows. Reading after him is as exhilarating as cracking with some other fellow’s best girl at 2 g. m. Even when he says nothing he does it eloquently and entertainingly. In the dreary waste of decadent literature the *Mirror* looms a grateful oasis, musical with rippling waters and redolent with the perfume of a thousand flowers. It is one of the few magazines I can read and relish when perfectly sober. But for all that, there’s something wrong with its editor, the Rev. Mr. Reedy. He is an apt illustration of the aphorism

that the higher the hills the deeper the holes. Like Trilby, he's tone deaf. His genius enacts the rôle of Svengali and makes him sing in tune, but he cannot tell to save him whether another is doing so. He is continually pouring libations of priceless Samian wine to the God of Reason, but his own palate cannot distinguish between bourbon and bock-beer. He admires James Whitcomb Riley and criticises Eugene Field, thinks M. Quad a humorist and abominates Mark Twain, approves of Bob Burdette and rejoices that Bill Nye is rotten-egged, apotheosizes Wiskerandum Jones and informs us that R. G. Ingersoll's prose-poems are unprofitable rot. What should be done to a literary caterer who spreads us such a banquet of hyblæan honey and head-cheese? Uncle Sam has recently established an institute where "lunatics, inebriates and geniuses—all regarded as "abnormals"—are to be experimented with in the interest of science. As the experimentalist will find himself wofully short of subjects for the latter class, I beg to call his attention to Mr. Reedy. There's no doubt about his having a severe attack of the divine afflatus; but there's a rift in the lute, a crack in the Pananini. He has drank deep of the Pierian Spring, but the blessed waters, so sweet in his mouth, are bitter in his belly. I want him patched up, so that after singing to us in the *Globe-Democrat* as sweetly as Petrarch, he will not throw defunct felines at himself in his own paper. He is probably the first poet to write an adverse criticism of his own productions. That proves that his abnormality is becoming too confoundedly abnormal. The *Mirror* man may be permitted to mock himself if he finds pleasure therein; but when he grabs a sledge and begins to pound the immortal ichor out of our other literary gods we demand the intervention of the police. The only true test of a humorist is the amount of pleasure he affords the public.

Meted with this measure, Mark Twain must be classed with Cervantes, and Bill Nye with Artemus Ward. The humor of Nye is coarse-grained and ephemeral, but has afforded millions a genuine guffah. I confess that I would as soon read a patent-office report or the *Gal-Dal's Slop-slops* as Nye's syndicate slush; but nothing that chases the blue devils even from undiscriminating Philistia deserves to be wholly condemned. M. Quad is a sketch writer of some ability, but his humor is machine-made and about as witty as a midnight snipe-hunt or pulling the badger. It's chief recommendation is that it can be taken in broken doses. Burdette sometimes succeeds in provoking a smile or a sniffle, but has never elicited a Teufelsdroch roar or penetrated to the fathomless Lake of Tears. Lewis and Burdette began their careers when newspaper funsters were few and far between. Like old Dan Rice's one-ring circus, they are simply a pleasant remembrance. The *Mirror* man gives us more true wit in a week than these old literary hacks ever carried in their heads. Riley's poetry is an unholy compromise between the literary nymphomania of Amélie Rives Chanler and the rollicking song of a speckled hen that has just come off her roost. He is simply a versifier, with power to portray neither the charm of pastoral life nor the fierce passion that flames like Hell's own fires in the Odes of Anacreon. He is merely a space-filler, an industrious pot-boiler, who has happened to hit off some pretty trifles, but knows naught of the Ahriman and Ormuzd that wage eternal war in the human heart. But rich and poor, the child at its mother's knee and the gray gran'sire at the portals of the grave, the lords of intellect and the low-browed ignorami, all have listened enraptured to the low sweet melody of the harp now hushed—all have laughed and wept and loved with Eugene Field.

EUGENE FIELD.

THE American press, that "great public educator" which has devoted millions of columns to the marriage of an American parvenu to a worthless duke, has scarcely mentioned Eugene Field's death. It has deluged us with inane gabble anent the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fluke; but has told little of the man whose genius swayed the hearts of millions. Jack Dempsey and Eugene Field died about the same time. The first was a second-rate pugilist, the last superior in every respect to Edgar Allan Poe; yet we are regaled with long biographies of the pug, while little is said of the poet. All the "great dailies" have given us pictures of the duke, before and after taking. They have filled pages with portraits of his pug-nosed bride and the bouquets presented on her wedding day. The counterfeit presentment of all the groomsmen and bridesmaids has been exploited, and even the ministers who coupled the giddy young goslings have smirked at us from the printed page. We have been treated to pictures of Dempsey, of Corbett and Flukesimmons, and even Culberson has loomed up in the journalistic rogues' gallery; but how many of these journalistic educators have thought it worth while to familiarize the public with the face of Eugene Field? It is a comfort to reflect that posterity will do justice to the dead poet—that his songs will live on the lips of love long after all the peanut politicians and windy pugs, after all the petty dukes and aspiring parvenues have passed forever from the memory of mankind. But what will future antiquarians think of our boasted civilization when they turn to the musty files of our diurnal press and there find Eugene Field's death dismissed with a dozen lines, while page after page is devoted to windy pugilists and the wedding of a decadent duke?

Field was not a poet of the first class. His was not the harp of David or of Homer, that thrills the blood like trumpets blown for war. His song is ever of simple things. It creeps into the heart and lingers there, sometimes a pleasure, more apt a pain, for his very humor is but a rainbow, born of hope and tears. Field wrought in both prose and poetry, and he wrought well. His "Voodoo Doctor Sam" and his "Little Boy Blue" may not be Kohinoors of purest ray serene; but they are at least dew-drops shaken from the pure heart of the great white rose into a literary world reeking with French eroticisms. No one can read Field without becoming better, braver, kindlier. His life and labors "shine like a good deed in a naughty world." That is why our public educators dismiss him in a few lines and hasten back to their pugs and parvenues.

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CURRENCY AND COMMON SENSE.

SECOND PAPER.

Detroit, Mich., May 12.

MR. BRANN:

We have formed here an ICONOCLAST club, composed of students and young professional men. We meet once a month to discuss the ideas advanced by your * * * magazine. In our judgment the interconvertible bond currency scheme, outlined in the May Iconoclast, would work to a charm and give us "an immutable measure of value"; but what of our foreign trade if we stop coining gold and silver? You did not touch on that point.

L. S. CALLAHAN,
Secretary.

We have laughed away the romantic gods of Greece and the ridiculous auspices of Rome; we have relegated to desuetude the monarch's divine right and substituted immortal life for the material rewards of the Mosaic law; we have put an electric girdle about the globe, banished Time and conquered Space, but we cling with slavish servility to the silver of Abraham and the gold of Solomon,—are bound to a barbaric system of barter, joined to an idol we know to be a Juggernaut.

The present, like other periods of business depression since the specialization of labor and consequent increase of its productive power, is not due to any lack of ability to create wealth, but to absence of exchange between producers of its various forms. Money is our exchange medium, and when we find that exchanges cannot be properly effected we may reasonably infer that our monetary system is at fault. If this conclusion be correct, it follows that an indispensable prerequisite to the proper operation of the industrial mechanism and the maximum employment of labor is a currency that will supply us with an ever-effective exchange medium, an immutable measure of value. I do not assume that such a currency would cure every commercial ill; but it would eliminate a factor that has ever been potent for evil in the realm of trade and assure industry a constant friend where it has so often found an insidious foe. Such a currency can be secured by the plan outlined in the May ICONOCLAST.

There appears to be no place for the Democratic party, in the forthcoming campaign. If the Cleveland wing dominates it and compels it to declare for the single standard it will find that the Republicans have that field preëmpted. If the sixteen-to-ones turn down the cuckoos they will find the Populists lustily shinnying on that side. And no

matter what the Democracy pledges, the people, after their recent experience, will put no faith in its promises. The wage of sin is death, and the Democracy has one foot in the grave and the other soaped.

* * *

THE CUCKOO CONFERENCE.

"WARWICK" AGAIN ON THE WARPATH

THOSE good souls who sneeze every time Grover Cleveland takes snuff got together at Waco recently to worship at the shrine of the "Stuffed Prophet," refurbish their faith and tell a dying world what to do to be saved. It was a "Sound Money Conference," so-called, and the display of monetary wisdom that marked its proceedings was calculated to make the shades of Mill and Montesquieu bump their heads together, take a reef in their robes and fly shrieking and gibbering into the uttermost gloom. I have space to notice only the wonderful oration of Judge George Clark, a nice little man who once tried to become governor of Texas by the grace of nigger Republican votes, and is now one of the self-constituted and somewhat "lippy" guardians of the "honor" of the Democratic party. I select his speech for special attention partly because he dearly loves newspaper notoriety, but chiefly because it is a fair sample of the logic that passed current with that congregation of cuckoo economists and two-by-four financiers. The address of the "Little Giant" was reserved for dessert at that feast of reason as something especially choice. It was the *chef d'œuvre* of the intellectual art gallery, the glittering climax of the political drama for which "Linseed" Alexander—stage manager

for our aspiring Roscius—kindly supplied the prologue. Had Clark's address been an impromptu affair—like that of his famous harmony (his) oration at Dallas—we might pass its imperfections by; might generously suppose that in the hurry of great ideas and bustle of big words, he accidentally tangled the thread of his discourse, dropped the linchpin out of his logic or inadvertently misplaced his sequence; but when a great statesman runs himself through a typewriter and even marks in the “laughter” and “applause” for the guidance of reporters before the speech is delivered, we must regard it as the best he can do and measure him accordingly. Let us examine the oration by paragraphs. When intellectual Giants deign to ope their lips we should treat each sentence as an oracle and strive to understand it. It were well nigh a crime to take down a whole goblet of Samian wine at a single gulp. We should dally with it, inhale the grateful aroma and tickle the palate with each separate drop. We should let it soak into us gradually and lift our fainting soul by imperceptible degrees into the empyrean of bliss, instead of rudely slamming it against heaven's bright o'er-hanging firmament like a pot of oleomargarine hoist by its own petard.

Judge Clark declares of the conference that “it flashes words of comfort to our glorious leader, who has stood, almost alone and unaided for two years and fought the battles for the honor and prestige of his party and his country.” The nation and the party must have been in dire straits indeed when they could produce but one patriot, could boast but one man of brains! How unfortunate that the battles waged by this doughty latter-day Hector should have resulted in the capture of Ilium by the Greeks—in the overflow of the Democratic legions, the disruption of his party and the almost irremediable

ruin of his country! But, like the colored troops, he fought nobly—even before the “Little Giant” broke out of the “free-silver lunatic” asylum, where he was so long held prisoner by some Circean incantation, and became “our glorious leader’s armor bearer. Perhaps if little ’Fraid had gone to the assistance of big ’Fraid sooner, instead of standing foremost in the ranks of his enemies and branding him as the pliant tool of Wall street and a traitor to his party and his country, the result would have been different. Think of one man practically constituting the American nation and the Democratic party for two years—Atlas upholding the world! No wonder everything wobbled.

Judge Clark warps it to the sixteen-to-ones with all the vindictiveness of Benedict Arnold waging war on his old companions in arms—piles Pelion upon Ossa by declaring them not only “lunatics,” but “silver monometallists.” Is a silver monometallist any worse than a gold monometallist? But Judge Clark poses as a bimetallist. Let’s see about that. Bi-metallism is the employment of two independent metals in the exchange media, each constituting a money of final payment by itself considered. Clark would bottom silver on gold as we do treasury notes. When a coin depends upon something other than itself for its debt-paying power it is simply token money and would serve exactly the same purpose if made of paper. Why in the name of logic should we make a token dollar of material worth fifty cents when we can just as well make it of material worth less than one cent? What Judge Clark seems to need is a financial dictionary. He’s no more a bi-metallist than he’s a bird. He might as appropriately call himself a tri-metallist, for he favors the coinage of copper on exactly the same terms that he sanctions the minting of silver.

He declares that the free coinage of silver will drive \$600,000,000 of gold out of the country, because base money expels good money, and the result will be "a contraction of the currency more than one-half at one blow." Free coinage, he declares "means the value of the sweat of the laboring man in this country shall be cut immediately one-half." Does even the dumbest gold-bug require a diagram to discover the fallacies and contradictions of those statements? "A contraction of the currency more than one-half," means that the purchasing power of every dollar left in circulation—no matter of what made—will be more than doubled. That is what Clark was trying to say when he prattled of "the value of the sweat of the laboring man" being cut down one-half. He meant that with our currency contracted one-half a dollar would purchase double the amount of labor that it will to-day. And thus far he is right; but how in the name of Aristotle can the silver dollar remain "base," and drive out "good-money," and at the same time purchase double the volume of "sweat" that the gold dollar now does? We understand from the resolutions of the "Sound Money Conference" that those astute financiers were opposed to the free coinage of silver lest it debase our currency by superabundance; but it seems that we were mistaken. The free coinage of silver is to be prohibited lest it produce a money famine.

But the Texas Jeremiah sees even worse evils concealed in free coinage than "currency contraction" and a radical reduction in "the value of sweat." He declares that this country owes four billion dollars in Europe, and adds, with the air of a man swinging the joker on the right-bower: "Think you that when disaster is threatened these investments will remain? No; they will come trooping back by the shipload to this country and good, honest,

dollars be demanded for their payment." Then the bottom will fall out of our financial cosmos with "such a crash as the history of nations gives no account of." Everybody will go broke and babies will cry for bread; the pig-weed will grow rank in the market-place and the melancholy owl complain to the gibbous moon in the palace of the merchant prince. But upon whom will our transatlantic brethren unload when the free-silver bogie affrights their fearful souls? Who is pledged to relieve them of their stock in American factories, mines and railways when they decide that the investment is unsafe? Will they demand immediate payment of that block of thirty-year gold bonds Cleveland sold abroad in time of peace, thereby deliberately compelling us to pay tribute to John Bull? And if so, why? Because our currency is "contracted more than one-half," and thereby more than doubled in purchasing power? Is that what will scare our foreign creditors into convulsions and cause them to swamp vessels with homeward-bound American securities? Really, if I saw such things as that while wide awake and perfectly sober I'd consult a doctor. The Judge is fearful that we could not pay the four billions we owe abroad if we should scare our six hundred millions of gold out of the country. It would leave Uncle Sam in a rather awkward predicament—akin to that of the man who had two bits with which to meet a hundred dollar note and inadvertently lost it shaking dice! (The Judge may learn something valuable anent our foreign debts in an article elsewhere in this issue entitled "Currency and Common Sense.")

But that is by no means the worst feature of the "Little Giant's" financial Fata Morgana or monetary nightmare. He assures us that more than ninety per cent. of the debts of this country, public and private, are payable

in gold—that it's so nominated in the bond. What's to happen to the poor debtor when gold goes out of circulation and his reckless creditor comes down upon him, demanding the pound of flesh? Of course the miserable Shylock will not accept silver even though, by "currency contraction," it has become twice as valuable as the gold dollar of to-day—will purchase double the volume of "sweat." Antonio will have to hustle about and get the gold, just as does Mexico when the interest on her bonds falls due. That unhappy country, Judge Clark assures us, has to "put down \$2 for \$1 to get gold to pay her interest with." The unutterable awfulness of Mexico's predicament is only equaled by that of the American who gives up two 50-cent pieces to get a dollar bill. If an American gold dollar will buy two Mexican silver dolars, is that man despoiled who gives two Mexican silver dollars for one American gold dollar? But according to Judge Clark, the sixteen-to-ones propose to make the American "cart-wheel" equal in value to two gold dollars. If they succeed in their hellish design, when Shylock swoops down upon us with his gold bonds we'll have the old buccaneer by the umbilicus! I have not encountered such wonderful logic since the nigger debating club of Galveston discussed transubstantiation ten years ago. I am not surprised that there should have been both "laughter" and "applause" when Judge Clark turned the bright effulgence of his powerful intellectual calcium into the dark corners of the money question. A negro minstrel monologue were like the sighing of cypress trees in a forsaken cemetery compared with such an incomparable parody on Mrs. Malaprop.

Resolution No. 2 of the "Sound Money Conference," accuses the free-silverites of the awful crime of trying to "seize and take possession of the Democratic party in

Texas and to drive from the party all those who differ with them," yet Clark boldly declares that "we intend to stay in the party and take charge of it, and don't you forget it. We will have no part or parcel with either your sort or the Populists. (Applause.)" And there you are—each faction on rule or ruin bent. Whether the free-silver dog should wag the gold-bug tail, or vice versa, is not my province to determine. My private opinion is that there's about as much brains in one end of the animal as the other, and as he will not be due in Washington again for a dozen years or so, he can chase his narrative or let it chase him, as seemeth unto him best, without seriously affecting the destiny of this mighty nation. But if called upon to express an opinion as to his probable mode of progression I would predict that he will move muzzle first as in the erstwhile—that if the tail becomes obstreporous it will be unscrewed and once more proudly wave from Wright Cuney's nigger Republican band wagon. It once before "took charge" of Texas' big Democratic mastiff—but the subsequent end of the wisest animal is not expected to learn much even in the school of experience. It has even forgotten how glad it was to get home—how lustily it wagged when the official head of the animal smiled approvingly.

Judge Clark closed his oratorical and intellectual exhibit with the statement that the gentlemen who have taken charge of the "integrity" of the nation and the "honor" of the Democratic party neither invite nor desire the coöperation of office-seekers, "If any man is after office let him keep away from us—we don't want his sort—we are hunting patriots." Yet the offices will have to be filled—including the governorship; but a casual glance at the personnel of the "Sound Money Conference" will convince the most skeptical that they will not be

permitted to go a-begging. Perhaps they have been already preëmpted—else why should the *hoi polloi* be cautioned to keep off the official grass? They seem to be wanted simply as supernumeraries in the great political drama entitled, “We are the People.”

A New Orleans gentleman takes his pen in hand to inform the ICONOCLAST that he does not agree with it in all things. We fear that he will hardly be able to secure an engagement in a dime museum on the strength of that distinction. The ICONOCLAST has a hades of a time agreeing with itself in all things.

The man who fights the “Rum Demon” for hire is usually a hypocrite who buys the cheapest booze to be had and absorbs it out of a jug.

* * *

THE PROHIBITION PLAGUE.

THE Prohibitionist, like the cut-worm and the financial crank, the red-bug and the itch bacillus, is again abroad in the land. When in that happier world beyond the skies, we are permitted to praise God without pausing for meals, we will probably learn why he elected to plague us with thorns and thistles, pismires and Prohibitionists. McLennan will put the wet-or-dry interrogatory to herself June 13, at the solicitation of various Meddlesome Matties, and trouble of a similar character is brewing in various neighboring bailiwicks. The Prohibition craze is like la grippe: When you think you have it exterminated and can proceed once more to the enjoyment of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, it rears up on its hind legs, sands its hands and takes a new hold. It is

harder to eradicate than inherited scrofula, as irrepressible and exasperating as the sullen mutterings of a soft-boiled corn in a skin-tight boot, or the forget-me-not favors of a rabid skunk. I sincerely trust that old McLennan will trample the Prohibition plague so deep into the sub-soil that it will not see the light of the sun again for a century; but it is a forlorn hope, not firmly bottomed on faith. Texas is becoming a veritable hot-bed of sanctificationists, who have conceived the idea that they have been divinely ordained to drag the millennium in by the ears with the aid of the secular law. They have concluded that men can be made healthy, wealthy and wise by compelling them to take their liquor out of a jug in the sacred seclusion of the smokehouse, instead of absorbing it from cut glass with seltzer on the side and lunch for lagniappe. They have solemnly decided that it is their duty as Americans and Christians to sit at the muzzle of their fellow-citizen and say how he shall load himself. Of course there is nothing in either the American Constitution or the Christian Bible warranting this idea; but men wise in their own conceit, who start in to reform the world, seldom care much for the Constitution of their country or the Faith of their fathers. The lessons of history are lost upon them, and appealing to logic were like casting pearls before swine. Of course among those who are pilgrimaging to Prohibition like Peter-the-Hermit's rabble to the Holy Sepulcher, are many honest—and ignorant—men: but they are probably outnumbered by the professional humbugs and unctuous hypocrites, back-door sneaks and meddlesome breeders of mischief. The earnest among them are apt to be two-by-four fanatics, as intolerant as Cotton Mather,—men who take it for granted that they've got all the wisdom and goodness of the world grabbed, that beyond their little Rhode Island of

intellect are only gibbering idiots and plotting knaves. They are of that class of bigots who boycott their brethren in politics and business for daring to differ with them, and decline to read a book that is not a faithful reflection of their own foolish ideas—lest they learn something. But honest and earnest ignorance, even though it resort to tongue-boring and witch-burning, is entitled to some respect. We should reserve our scorn for those sacred mummers who damn the saloon at home and sit up with it all night abroad; who make tearful temperance talks—for a valuable consideration—groan like a sick calf hit with a battering-ram whenever they see a young man come out of a barroom; then sneak up a dirty alley, crawl through the side door of a second-class saloon, call for the cheapest whisky in the shop, run the glass over trying to get the worth o' their money, pour it down at a gulp and scoot in a hurry lest somebody ask 'em to treat: who have a chronic toothache—in the stomach—which nothing but drugstore whisky will relieve; who keep a jug of dollar-a-gallon bug-juice hid under the bed, and sneak to it like a thieving hyena digging up a dead nigger; who rent their property for saloon purposes, then piously “pray the Lord to protect the young from temptation.”

The country Prohib usually votes as he talks, even if he does not always practice what he preaches. He buys his “bitters” by the jug or bottle, and is well aware that whether as makers of “cordials” or corn whisky, the distilleries will continue to run—that the price of grain will not be seriously affected; but his city brother is a trifle fearful that Prohibition will put a kibosh on business, and is not overly anxious to save the country at the cost of a pecuniary sacrifice. Salvation is supposed to be “free,” and guardian angels should not be expected to provide their own feathers. Souls are priceless things, of

course; but when it comes to purchasing them for Jesus in job lots at the cost of diminished trade, lower rentals and higher taxes, the very elect of the Lord—if they have aught to lose—begin to trim and tergiversate, to patch up a peace between John Barleycorn and their so-called conscience. When a fine amen-corner theory and a stubborn financial condition try to pass each other on a single track the former invariably gets it in the umbilicus, or thereabouts. It is just possible that personal liberty may be preserved to the people of McLennan county by those very Wacoites whose inordinate itch for meddling has precipitated the present vicious assault on the inherent rights of man.

It is not my present purpose to enter into an elaborate discussion of the liquor problem. It is old straw that has been regularly re-threshed ever since the days of good old Noah—whom the Lord tenderly preserved while letting the Prohibitionists drown. A new crop of the cold-waterites has come up—and scientists say that another deluge is almost due. The Prohibition theory may possibly be correct—only egotism can be cock-sure of anything; but it is certainly not in accord with the teachings of the Hebrew Prophets and Christian Apostles. The poesy and philosophy of forty centuries are against it, and it got never a good word from modern science until it had succeeded in placing the wine-cup under the ban—thereby substituting for wholesome stimulants a demoniacal brand of booze. Horace sang to his Samian wine; Luther, the father of the Reformation, declared the man who loves not wine, woman and song remains a fool all his life long; Washington took his with a little water and sugar, and Cleveland can put down three fingers “straight” without ever batting his eyes. St. Paul advised the brethren not to boycott their stomachs, while Christ changed water into

wine at the wedding-feast, when he could just as easily have made mulled alcohol, gingerine, Hostetter's Bitters or some other popular Prohibition beverage. It was wine and of the best—perhaps Mumm's Extra Dry, with a white-aproned coon to pull the cork. Were our dear Lord on earth to-day he would be more liable to transform artesian water into Anheuser-Busch or Kentucky cocktails than to paddle about with the whining Prohibitionists.

The theory that strong drink is an unmixed evil that must be abolished, is not in accord with the genius of this government, which would give to the individual untrammeled liberty in matters concerning only himself. Experience has proven Prohibition a rank failure and the customs of mankind from the very dawn of history brand it a rotten fraud. The people of every age and clime have used stimulants, and we may safely conclude that, despite the Prohibs, they will be employed so long as man exists upon the earth. Banish liquor and man will find a substitute,—even if it be opium, morphine or cocaine. It is said that Thor, the great northern god of war, once tried to lift what he supposed was an old woman, but found to his sorrow that it was the mighty serpent that encircles the world. The Prohibs are warring upon what they foolishly imagine to be a frivolous habit of man, but will yet learn that they are running counter to an immutable decree of God—are trying to alter the physical constitution of the human race by means of county elections.

There is not a single plea put forth by the Prohibs that will stand analysis—not one. There is no more reason why we should banish whisky and beer because some are drunkards than that we should banish meat and bread because some are gluttons. The doctors assure us that more people become physical wrecks from overeating than from overdrinking. Some men commit crimes when

under the influence of liquor; but more because of women or greed for gold. Now if we banish liquor because it encourages crime, we should, to be consistent, send all the wealth and women with it—and, if the ladies don't object, I'll go along. Some men go crazy because of "red-eye," and more because of religion. Shall we, therefore, knock in the heads of our barrels and burn our Bibles? If there were no liquor there would be no drunkards, and if there were no wealth there would be no robbers. If there were no food there would be no gourmands, and if there were no offices there'd be no Jim Crow politicians. If there were no gold there'd be no "reserve fund," and if there were no women there'd be no rape-fiends. If there were no water nobody would be drowned, so I move that we abolish that favorite drink of the donkey. The crying need of this country is a gold-cure for the Prohibition craze.

Go ahead, gentlemen: make Waco a dry town and give the jug-builders and Dallas dealers a chance. Shut up the decent saloon and inaugurate the disreputable "blind-tiger"—where the most villainous varieties of coffin-paint are passed out by a hidden hand at the same old price. Compel us to import our beer and ice it at home—the bottles will make handy playthings for the babies, and serve to remind them that their fathers are not freemen. Do everything possible to banish trade, raise taxes and drive out of the county self-respecting manly men who propose to remain autocrats of their own internal economy. Let us get rid of those who do not choose to sacrifice their American independence for the sake of a few weak sisters who cannot see a saloon sign without having the simians. Waco will then be such a nice quiet resort for overworked people from Dallas and Fort Worth when they want complete rest, and the grass in our steets

will make a charming refuge for the mule-eared rabbit. With the saloon hermetically sealed—at one end at least—we can then turn our attention to forms of baptism, take water in all styles, and live upon one another as cosily and comfortably as a basket of adders, our chief occupation spying about keyholes and acting as informers. And that will just suit a considerable contingent of pious brethren in this good old Baptist stronghold.

“ Some were born for great things and some were born for small,

And some it is not recorded why they were born at all.”

So sang the poet. But despite the laches of the record, most of us have an idea that we were put here for a purpose, even though it be to busy ourselves as sandfleas or red-bugs on the body social—to enounce the foolish doctrine that the “ uncrowned kings ” of this country must be wired away from the insidious cocktail like so many mangy cayuses from white clover.

* * *

COURTESIES AND CORRUPTION.

I CHANCED to pass through Austin on the day the legislature adjourned and the train was quickly filled with statesmen returning to their *lares et penates* after having laboriously added a few more reams to the already superabundant laws of the realm.

“ Tickets,” ejaculated the conductor in that brisk, business-like manner peculiar to manipulators of the punch, and every statutory architect went down in his jeans and promptly produced—a pass! Not the ordinary trip pass, such as the country editor sometimes enjoys, but an annual.

"Gerate Gawd," observed the "con" with an audible sigh. "Amen," rejoined the "Apostle," who carries his religion with him into the highways and byways of life and occasionally stiffens the backbone of his orthodoxy with a short-horse prayer.

I have no objection to a fellow mortal riding on a free pass. An annual over a trunk-line is as soothing as a mint julep at two o'clock in the morning. When a fellow's paying fare the rattling rails seem to say, "Monop-monop-monopoly-nop: it's-tough-it's-tough-it's-awfully-tough," and to reiterate it in dreary monotone until the victim falls asleep with his head anchored on the mahogany-veneered window-casing and his feet in the aisle to provoke the hair-trigger profanity of the brakeman; but a free pass changes the clickety-click of the rails to, "You're-right-in-the-right-in-the-right-in-the-push; the-pub-the-pub-the-public-be-damned." A man gets wonted to an annual, and when the year expires and the poor little thing returns to the G.P.A. who gave it, it is invariably accompanied by a fervent prayer from the bereaved for its resurrection.

Still, I have a precious poor opinion of that public servant who will ride on a free pass then charge up ten cents a mile to his lord and master; especially when cotton is coquetting with zero and the treasury empty as a pint flask after a Prohibition rally, or a George Clark harangue on the currency question.

I was recently in the office of the manager of a Texas railway when a gentleman applied for an annual. The reply was prompt:

"What claim have you on this road? A railway is a cold-blooded business concern. It sells transportation as the grocer sells sugar—parts with it only for value received."

What did those legislators do to earn their annuals? If they did nothing to earn them; if the pasteboards were an ex officio windfall, why did the holders charge up their mileage to the State?

It was expected that the Twenty-fourth legislature would enact laws affecting railways; hence the large crop of passes—the multitudinous sops to Cerberus. I do not mean to insinuate that the honorable gentlemen were purchased with free passes; but I do mean to say, without any circumlocution, that the aforesaid passes *were issued for that express purpose, and the recipients knew it.* Probably the most doubtful member of the legislature would have hotly resented a direct attempt at bribery; but “courtesies” that may mean the saving of hundreds of dollars in the course of the year, were graciously accepted by the very best. Of course Aristides and Aurelius loudly protested that these courtesies could in nowise influence their public acts—and of course the people knew that they were lying. Even the best of human nature is not that kind of stuff—and the best quality seldom goes into politics. A rantankerous anti-railway agitator goes into the legislature, finds a number of annuals in his mail with the compliments of the general managers, and—modifies his views! As a modifier of views the annual can give argument cards and spades and beat it blind. “A penny saved is a penny earned,” and with all these earned pennies weighing down his trousers’ pockets, the legislator naturally feels very kindly towards the corporations that have treated him so royally. Of course he’s no peon because he has accepted a pass—he’s only altered his point of view. There are divers and sundry ways to skin a cat, and the railway manager who cannot peel pussy’s cuticle as you like it will soon be planting hogs.

Suppose that the grocers of Waco were asking the city

council for some valuable concession, and should issue to each alderman a ticket good for all the family supplies he might need during the year, and those tickets were accepted and used? There would be a wail in Israel that would 'wake the dead. Yet wherein is it worse for lawmakers to accept groceries from those who have a pecuniary interest in their public acts than to accept transportation and the free use of sleeping cars? Soap and sugar are no more representatives of value than are transportation and sleeping-car privileges.

I have no desire to impugn the integrity of the gentlemen over whom so many five-dollar-a-minute prayers have been spilled at public expense. Like Brutus, they are all honorable men—perhaps; still, a competent authority has declared that "A railway company is a cold-blooded business concern. It sells transportation as a grocer does sugar—parts with it only for value received." Now don't grow angry with the ICONOCLAST, good gentlemen. If one of the railway officials whose courtesies you have enjoyed—while charging up ten cents a mile to the State—is wicked enough to declare that you were purchased with "store orders" like Mexican votes on the lower Rio Grande, could the ICONOCLAST help it? Of course not! Keep your temper, sweet gentlemen. Don't grow angry—at least not angry enough to send back your free passes, then go hang yourselves like so many Judas Iscariots. Do not take it too much to heart. The very best of men will trip sometimes. Even Shakespeare is said to have been a thief; but he lived it down.

There were some queer characters in the Twenty-third legislature. When the \$2 per diem got into action many of the members became economical and left the hotels for private boarding-houses. One honorable gentleman who

had been living on the fat of the land, struck a hash-foundry whose chef was not imported from France and whose bill of fare somewhat resembled the laws of the Medes. His epicurean stomach could not stand it, but he'd go in every day with other guests, survey the banquet board, sorrowfully murmur, "Thirteen eight," then leave without touching his fodder and fill up on free lunch at Charlie Cortizio's. As he was a Populist by profession, the household soon sized him up as a dangerous lunatic and the landlord became greatly alarmed.

"Here," he demanded, "what the devil do you mean by this 'Thirteen-eight' business?"

"My dying friend," said he of the sorrowful countenance, "I always call to mind a verse of scripture when I sit down to meat, and the eighth verse of the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews invariably occurs to me first when I tackle your table."

"Then he moved into other quarters, while the landlord borrowed a Bible, turned to the designated verse and read: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

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TEXAS AND TOLERANCE.

CRAINFILL SUPERSEDES CHRIST.

A SUBSCRIBER at Savannah, Ga., sends me a newspaper containing an account of the attempt made by the ministers of Hoboken, N. J., to prevent Col. Robt. G. Ingersoll delivering a lecture in that city, and asks, "Can't you touch up those intolerant Jerseyites?" I could, and it would afford me some satisfaction to do so; but it would

be firing away ammunition without effect. Professing Christians who believe that God Almighty needs their guardianship—that he can be injured by the ablest agnostic on the earth—are not amenable to reason, and the ICONOCLAST is not so well provided with pearls that it can afford to cast them before swine. When ministers imagine that the religion planted by the toil and watered by the tears of the Immaculate Son of God can be uprooted by a single scoffer; that it cannot stand the fierce light which beats upon Reason's forum and defy all the ballistæ and battering-rams of human logic; that it must be sheltered from the puny attacks of mortal men lest they prove it a fraud and make it a by-word and a shaking of the head to the nations, their faith must be woefully weak or their lives a brazen fraud. Truth does not hide away in dark corners, but seeks the garish light of the noonday sun. It does not fear the attacks of Falsehood, but stands ever in the world's arena, courting the conflict. The Christian religion is true or it is false. It is of God or it is of the Devil. If true it will stand the severest test. If of God it is indestructible as the law of gravitation. Then why do its ordained defenders take refuge behind long forgotten laws born of brutish ignorance, and with the policeman's bludgeon strive to close the mouth of honest criticism? The poet assures us that "Thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just"; yet the leaders of the armies of the Lord will not fight, even on compulsion. Instead of meeting logic with logic and the fallible reason of man with the authoritative decrees of God, they answer every attack of infidelity with a tirade of foul calumny, then appeal to the laws of the land to protect them in their pitiful weakness. They shriek "infidel" when it was infidels whom Christ toiled and suffered to save. They howl "blasphemer," when their great

Master forgave even those who nailed Him to the cross and mocked His agonies. The tactics adopted by the church to crush those who presume to question or dare to differ is making infidels by the million. The day has gone by when men of intelligence were content to close their eyes, open their mouths and swallow without question every foolish assertion of clerical fatheads. Formerly they builded their Reason on their Faith; now they are grounding their Faith upon their Reason—that infinitesimal fragment of Godhood which burns, more or less brightly, in every human brain. They are demanding that the Christian religion be cast into the crucible where every assumption of science is tried by fire, and either comes forth in deathless splendor or is relegated to the rubbish heap.

Yes, it were a real comfort to “touch up those intolerant Jerseyites”; but my correspondent must excuse me. There’s an old adage to the effect that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones—and Texas can furnish forth more hidebound dogmatists, narrow-brained bigots and intolerant fanatics in proportion to population than can any other section of these United States. That is why the ICONOCLAST located in Texas. It came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. When it has thoroughly reformed the Texas ministry it will be time enough for it to tackle that of other States. We are somewhat inclined to sneer at the old-time Puritans of New England and the exuberant cranks of Kansas. Ever and anon some able editor mounts to the roof garden of his donjon keep and thanks God that we are not as other people; but the cold hard fact remains that Massachusetts and Kansas combined cannot furnish so large a contingent whom it were unsafe to trust with power to persecute for religious opinion’s sake. Of course, Texas has

as many broad-gauged and progressive people as any land or clime can boast; but she is cursed with a grand army of Me-and-God creatures of the Cranfillian type, who would, if invested with plenary power, establish a strict censorship of the press and permit nothing to be published that was not considered ultra-orthodox—that did not begin with hypocritical groans and end with blasphemous “amens”; who would require Jews and Catholics to recant on pain of death and place heretics under harrows of iron. In most States the church has made grand progress, broadened, become more tolerant, more Christ-like—calling science, art and education to its aid while casting non-essentials aside; has realized that

“New occasions teach new duties,
Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still and onward
Who would keep abreast of truth.”

But the Texas division seems to have become hopelessly stuck in the Serbonian bogs of a brainless bigotry. It is not content to care for the spiritual welfare of man, but insists upon usurping the functions of the State and providing for his temporal well-being also. It would make him devout, not by God’s love, but by due process of law. Having made it a criminal offense for him to pursue his usual vocation on Emperor Constantine’s “holy Sabbath,” it now aspires to close all fairs and other places of instruction on that day, and we may soon expect it to send a constable after those who fail to attend divine service and cannot furnish a doctor’s certificate of inability so to do. It has banded itself together in a political party with the avowed purpose of dictating what man shall drink, and will doubtless next prescribe the cut of his clothing and limit his library to Slattery’s and Sam Jones’

sermons, a Protestant Bible and the *Baptist Standard*. And the most remarkable phase of it all is that Cranfill has become infinitely more sacred than Christ, the political tenets of the church militant holier than the Ten Commandments. You may declare the Garden of Eden episode a myth, and even hint that the Immaculate Conception is but an old pagan legend in a new dress, and be allowed to live; but one doubt regarding the efficiency of Prohibition were sufficient to damn you, while to suggest that either Cranfill, Jones or Slattery are out for the long green and have as little religion as a rabbit, were rankest blasphemy—a sin against the Holy Ghost.

Fortunately the liberal element dominates in Texas, as it does in every civilized country, and the fiendish wolf of fanaticism can only tug at its chain and show its venomous teeth. Not being permitted to put men and women to the torture for uttering their honest convictions in a land of so-called religious liberty; to flay them alive for daring to dissent from some ridiculous dogma cooked up by half-crazed dunderheads during the Dark Ages; to drag them at the cart's tail and bore their tongues with hot irons in the name of a beneficent Deity, these professed followers of the Man of Galilee resort to sneaking boycotts, petty annoyances and cowardly calumnies. They prove in every way possible that their hearts, instead of being full to overflowing with the grace of God and the catholic charity of Christ, are bitter little pools in whose poisonous waters and fetid scum writhe and wriggle unclean reptiles such as Dante saw in the desolate regions of the damned. That the picture is not over-drawn everyone who has chanced to provoke the ire of the ultra-religious element of Texas knows too well. It were equivalent to invading a den of rattlesnakes or stirring up a rabid skunk. Tom Paine was a devout Deist. At the

shrine of the Most High God he humbly bowed the knee. He never penned an irreligious line nor uttered an immoral sentiment. He was an intellectual Colossus, towering head and shoulders above even the Titans of his time. He was the unfaltering champion of freedom, the guide, philosopher and friend of the new-born nation. But for his fearless pen, whose path of fire led on to liberty, the sword of Washington might have slumbered in its sheath. Paine did more than all the preachers of his day to nerve the eagle's wing for its imperial flight—to fling Freedom's banner, like a burst of glory, into the leaden sky. But he chanced to disagree with the orthodoxy of his day, and for a hundred years he has been denounced and damned as an enemy of God and a curse to mankind. Even his dying bed has been heaped with brutal lies, and across his grave still beat and break the accursed waves of "Christian" calumny. In many portions of the country the church has ceased to belittle and belie Tom Paine; but the ultra-orthodox of Texas still insist that he was an atheist and an outlaw who repented of his foul crimes too late to escape the horrors of Hell.

The New England Puritans who hanged witches and persecuted Quakers felt that they were discharging a disagreeable duty. They were the creatures of an ignorant and superstitious but God-fearing age, and their cruelties, which have left so dark a stain upon the annals of the Christian church, were performed more in sorrow than in anger. If they inflicted tortures in the name of religion they were willing to suffer death in its most terrible form in defence of their faith. With them religion was a serious thing and morality its synonym. If ignorant they were honest, and if brutal they were brave. They despised the rewards of this world, trampled its frivolities beneath their iron-shod feet, loved God with their whole hearts and

hated a liar and a hypocrite as they did the imps of Hell. How is it with the Texas intolerants? Instead of fixing their eyes steadfastly upon the Kingdom of God, they are the most persistent seekers after the almighty dollar, the most eager for social preferment and political advancement of any class in the commonwealth. They will give blows, but will not stand to receive them, and instead of regarding with kingly contempt that man who would swerve one iota from the truth to preserve his life, they have made of lying a powerful lever with which they hope to overthrow religious liberty, transform the State into a theocracy and force free-born American citizens to submit to the petty slavery of sumptuary laws. Their preachers, instead of serving without salary and looking forward to a heavenly reward as did the Apostles, are ever seeking "calls" to fatter financial pastures. When the legislature is to select a brace of chaplains to insult Almighty God with perfunctory prayers—paid for at the rate of \$5 a minute by men glad of an opportunity to earn a dollar a day—there's a wild rush of the sanctified time-servers to the capital city, and the methods they adopt to corral the succulent sinecure would disgrace a railroad lobby or cause a bunco-steerer to blush. They have divorced morality from religion and substituted unadulterated gall for the fear of God. Had the religious fervor of the Puritans dominated the world we would have had men of mistaken methods but of iron mould; should the fashionable politico-religiosity of Texas prevail we would have, to borrow from Macaulay, "the days of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot and the slave."

Unquestionably there are many worthy church communicants in Texas, as elsewhere; but they appear to be

in a hopeless minority—a few grains of sound corn in a pile of compost. There are broad-gauged men in the Protestant ministry here—men who serve the Lord in spirit and in truth, and by their kindly acts, progressive ideas and noble tolerance dignify His cause; but they are the exception instead of the rule and are almost invariably unpopular with the great body of church communicants, whose ideal appears to be a preacher “with just ability enough to deceive and just religion enough to persecute.” During the recent Prohibition campaign in McLennan county a minister of the gospel, believing sumptuary laws violative both of the spirit of the Christian Bible and the American constitution, spoke and worked against it. What happened? Did a committee of his brethren in Christ wait upon him and strive by kindly argument to convince him that he was wrong? Did the other preachers offer up public prayers that he be brought within the pale of their political party? Not a bit of it. They poured out upon him the seven vials of their wrath—attacked him with the vindictive hatred of a pack of demons torturing a lost soul, or a drove of mangy jackasses kicking a dead lion. They belabored him from the pulpit and the rostrum, and turned the sectarian press into a reeking sewer that emptied upon him the foulest filth. These “Christians,” these professed followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, who was all love and charity and gentleness, reached for his vitals with beaks and claws like famished vultures, then served him as the unclean Yahoos did the hapless Gulliver when they found him beneath their roost in Houyhnhnm land. And so they serve every man who declines to permit them to do both his religious and political thinking for him; who refuses to take his place among the intellectual goslings and trail blindly in the wake of some flat-headed old ministerial

gander, squawking when he squawks and fluttering when he flies. There are ministers occupying prominent Texas pulpits who haven't originated an idea in forty years, and who would not recognize the Incarnate Son of God if they met him in the road. It is not necessary that a man should possess an iota of intellect to become a popular preacher. In fact, brains are but in his way, for in orthodoxy there is absolutely no room for reason. He needs only to become a Prohibitionist—not necessarily a teetotaler—cultivate a sanctified whine calculated to curdle milk, grab the crank of some pitiful little gospel mill and begin to grind. Let him but select the heavenly turnpike on which he suspects there will be the most travel, set up his little toll-gate, do the Jeremiah act and he'll soon have a mob of sanctified nonentities about him who shame the Devil at his own game on week-days and try to bunco the blessed Saviour on Sunday. I have noticed that those who were most fearful that I would commit the awful sin of blasphemy, or "desecrate the Christian Sabbath" by playing ball with the boys or dancing with the girls were the people I had to watch closest in a trade; but those who sat up nights to agonize lest the young be led astray by some awful atheist, could tell the smoothest falsehood with the straightest face; that those who wept the most copiously because the heathen of foreign lands had no Bible, were a trifle backward in supplying the heathen right here at home with bread; that those who cried "awmen" the loudest at camp-meetings were usually expert circulators of calumnies. If we could trade our ham-fat preachers for Good Samaritans at a ratio of 16 to 1, our brass-collar orthodoxy for pure morality, and about thee hundred thousand brainless bigots and canting hypocrites for a yaller dog and lose him, Texas would be infinitely better off.

A DAMNABLE DECISION.

THE decision of the Supreme Court in the income-tax case has placed this nation twenty years nearer a revolution that may terminate in a Reign of Terror. It has issued to the plutocrat a patent of nobility—declared that he belongs to a privileged class in nowise amenable to the laws that govern the proletarian. It has erected a barrier between Dives and Lazarus, drawn the line of battle between the Cormorant and the Commune. It has transformed the Federal Constitution from a palladium of liberty into an instrument of oppression, the tool of tyranny. That decision is a challenge to destiny, a red blanket in the face of an infuriated bull, a mockery of Samson by foolish Philistines as he stands, blind and desperate, his brawny arms encircling the pillars of our political temple. It is a crime against the common people, a poisoned dirk driven into the very vitals of the American Republic, a foul blasphemy of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, the terrestrial Trinity of our fathers.

Doubtless the occupants of the Supreme Bench resemble Brutus in that they are “all honorable men”; but if such a halting, illogical and every way infamous verdict had been brought in by a petit jury there would have been more than a suspicion of bribery. The decision as handed down by Chief Justice Fuller reads like the special pleading of a jackleg lawyer, employed to defend a rich but notorious robber caught despoiling the pantries of the poor. Talleyrand declares that language was made to conceal thought; but even the opaque verbal flood in which the decision floats like a grisly skeleton in a sea of slime, cannot conceal the fact that Fuller knew the ruling was both dangerous and damnable. Like the lady in the

play, he doth protest too much—consumes an hour in a dismal failure to establish a radical difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. It reminds one of the plea of Queen Elizabeth that she possessed a cavalry regiment of which neither horse nor man could be hurt, viz., a regiment of tailors on mares. He is too evidently arguing to his own conscience, which, like the dead Banquo, will not down.

The four dissenting justices did not accuse their associates of corruption; but they did charge them with having committed a crime—with having instituted a despotism of wealth, with having deliberately endangered the existence of the American government by an abortive science of definition. Never before in the history of the Supreme Court did the dissenting justices express such indignation over a decision or intimate so plainly that their associates were either fools or knaves. The vigorous, almost insulting protests of the dissenting justices; the tremendous monetary interests at stake, together with the scholastic hair-splittings, argumentative writhings and illogical twistings and turnings that distinguish the decision, may mean much or little according to the strength of the critic's confidence in the incorruptibility of the court. For my own part, I do not believe that the betrayal of the people was the result of direct bribery, as in the case of Benedict Arnold; but I do believe that such pressure was brought to bear by the plutocracy upon our court of last resort as to shamefully defeat the ends of justice. All men are more or less malleable, and several members of our Supreme Court exceptionally so—veritable Trilbys in pants, who find it “difficult to say nay to earnest pleadings.”

The decision is simply an official notification that upon the shoulders of the poor must continue to rest the

burden of taxation. The court decided, by a vote of 5 to 4, that a tax on income arising from interest or rent is "direct," therefore unconstitutional unless apportioned among the several States on a basis of population; while a tax on income derived from labor, professional service or merchandizing is "indirect" and may be imposed at the pleasure of Congress and without apportionment. The gross injustice of such a ruling is too palpable to require comment, while its utter absurdity must be evident to every man capable of reasoning from a premise to the simplest conclusion. A has an annual income of \$1,000,-000, derived from the rental of real estate or interest on capital invested in securities; B has an income of \$1,000, derived from the occupation of merchant or machinist, butcher or baker. Congress, according to the Supreme Court, may, by a simple "Be it enacted," tax the petty income of B, but is forbidden to touch the colossal income of A, except by apportionment, when it becomes the province of each State to say how its pro rata shall be provided. A tax on the individual earnings of B is "indirect," while a tax on the revenues of A, drawn second-hand from the efforts of others, is "direct"—perhaps on the theory that "two negatives make a positive." The Federal government can shove its hand as deeply as it likes into the pocket of labor, but cannot touch one penny of the thousand pounds in the overflowing coffers of the capitalist. So says the court. How is that for the fundamental law of a land that poses in the face of Heaven as "the refuge of the world's oppressed"?

And what is the reply to this complaint? "Apportionment." Apportion Hell—between the West and South! Justice Harlan truly says that "No such apportionment can possibly be made without doing monstrous, wicked injustice to the many for the benefit of the favored few in

particular States." Do those "able editors," short-horse politicians and other intellectual animalculæ now echoing the word like lost burros braying for company, know what constitutional apportionment of the public burden means? It means that when the Federal government desires to raise a sum of money by such method each State must contribute thereto, not in proportion to its taxable wealth, but according to its population, no matter how poverty-stricken its people. It means that one State must put up as much for a mechanic out of employment, or a farmer with a mortgaged crop, as another for a Rockefeller or a Gould. The privilege of taxing the great incomes by the method of apportionment simply means that labor is at perfect liberty to bite off its nose to spite its face, then leap from the frying pan into the fire. No political party will ever dare perpetrate such an infamy as the apportionment of the income tax. Not even the Supreme Court—that pitiful cat's-paw of the plutocracy—had the audacity to indorse it.

While a portion of the law was declared constitutional, it was all killed—the tail was permitted to go with the hide. The law was aimed at large incomes, many of which are drawn neither from rent nor interest; but the court denied the axiom that "half a loaf is better than no bread." It practically decided that should the government draft two men for war, and one escape, it would hasten to discharge the other, instead of mustering him in and sending a sergeant after the runaway. The decision means that we cannot compel men to contribute to the support of government according to their means until we have a constitution which the plutocrat, with friends at court, cannot possibly pervert—or the people decide that patience has ceased to be a virtue. It means that Wealth has decreed that Consumption shall bear the

burden—that tariff reform and reduced excises are, for the present at least, “an iridescent dream.” It means that no matter how imminent the peril of the government, or pressing its need, it is powerless to compel the plutocrat to contribute of his means to the defense of our flag. It means, as Justice Brown expressed it, “The submergence of the liberties of the people in a sordid despotism of wealth.” It means that the people who have ever looked to the Supreme Court for protection from outrage and oppression, will henceforth regard it as the slave of their enemies. It means general dissatisfaction and growing unrest, until, despairing of righting his wrongs in the name of reason, the Titan will put forth his terrible strength, and the government of the United States of America will thenceforth live “only in the tomb of the world’s history.”

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A BIBLICAL BEAR STORY.

THE Bible is fruitful of snake and fish stories, replete with dreadful tales of ghosts and goblins, giants and chimeræ dire; but no Biblical narrative possessed for my childhood such absorbing interest as that of Elisha and his brace of anthropophagous bears. In early youth, as in later years, I resembled the Lord in that I was no respecter of persons. There may have been other points of resemblance, but they were not sufficiently pronounced to excite remark. I had a bad habit of giving “back talk” to my elders, believing that youth has some rights which even age is bound to respect; hence I was frequently warned to beware the sad fate of those bad little boys who made ribald remarks anent Elisha’s seldom hair.

This interesting animal appears to have long been Elijah's under-study, his man Friday, so to speak. Like Mary and her little lamb, everywhere that Elijah went Elisha was sure to go. He stuck to him like a cockle-burr to a merino buck, or an importunate creditor to a bankrupt. I rather suspect that Elijah went on that celestial excursion to get rid of him. I think that I would have ridden in a chariot of fire, or even straddled a streak of lightning to cut such bad company. Elijah tried to sidetrack his prophetic shadow at Gilgal, but it was no go. Elisha trotted along to Beth-el—wherever that may be—to Jericho and beyond the Jordan, despite the express orders of his master, much as a persistent pup trails its expostulating human property, but whether for genuine love of Elijah, or to appropriate his garments when the latter put on celestial raiment, deponent saith not. He got his master's mantle when the latter was swiped by a marauding whirlwind, and seems to have been well content,—to have shed no tears over the enforced absence of its former occupant. Several other people who witnessed the ascension were quite sure that Elijah was the victim of an infant cyclone and insisted on searching for the body, but to this Elisha strenuously objected. He may have considered it wasted effort; and, again, he may have feared that it would endanger his story anent that chariot of fire—which had inadvertently escaped the notice of the other eye-witnesses.

Having parted the river Jordan with his second-hand mantle—the waters fleeing affrighted from the unusual visitor—he was accepted by the simple people of Jericho as Elijah's legitimate successor and honored accordingly. He had tramped so long, however, that the spirit of the professional hobo as well as the spirit of prophecy was upon him, and he longed to be jogging along the dusty

lanes and foraging his fodder, so he set out for Beth-el afoot. He does not appear to have had any business in Beth-el, but that was all the more reason why the old vagabond should go there. The prophets of his time were not in the habit of tarrying very long in one place, but kept swinging round the circle and living on the country, much like the modern evangelists.

The children of Jericho appear to have resembled the nineteenth century youngsters in their unappeasable appetite for fireworks. They had heard about Elijah going up like a Fourth of July rocket, but had not been permitted to witness the pyrotechnic display. They knew that Elisha had fallen heir to the business and raiment of the original aeronaut, and naturally watched him with considerable interest, fully expecting that he would eventually take a header into the blue empyrean with a pair of flaming horses, scattering a stream of sparks behind them. But Elisha has packed his red bandana and is leaving the city—they are about to be disappointed. They cannot surrender the long anticipated circus without a protest, at least an appeal, so they follow him beyond the gates of the city, crying in their shrill treble.

“Go up, thou old baldhead! Go up, thou old baldhead!”

They doubtless do not mean to be disrespectful, but are dreadfully eager to see the show. They have discussed it and dreamed of it for many days,—have trailed every little whirlwind to see if it was hunting for Elisha and scrutinized each horse headed in his direction, to see if it was on fire. They have heard that Elijah went out into the wilderness beyond the Jordan to make his ascent instead of doing the aeronautic act from the market-place and getting all the caravans to give excursion rates, and they suspect that Elisha is sneaking out to board a

whirlwind at some obscure way-station. What wonder that they grow clamorous and cry:

“ Go up, thou old baldhead ! ”

But the duly ordained prophet of God does not take the curtain calls of the gallery in a kindly spirit. He is evidently sensitive about his scarcity of hair and considers their remarks not only an affront to his dignity but an insult to the Deity. Perhaps while dozing at the town pump the godless gamins had painted a face on the rear elevation of his cranium, so that it was difficult for people to determine in what direction the prophet was steering. Or the peddlers of hair rejuvenators may have persecuted him until his naturally sunny disposition had soured. Anyway, the allusion to his opéra bouffe certificate was too much for his Christian charity. Instead of gathering the little gamins about him and explaining the significance of Elijah's translation, instructing them to lead worthy lives and thereby become an honor to their parents and a blessing to the world; instead of carrying with him to Beth-el the love and best wishes of the little ones and praying God to protect them from evil:—

“ He turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood and tare forty and two children of them.”

Then Elisha continued on his mission of love, recking not the blood of the butchered babes—left the poor little bodies for the bears and buzzards. Forty and two little children lie torn and mangled in the wild-wood, their white faces upturned to an angry God. There is woe and wail in Jericho as the sun goes down that day, mothers weeping for their children and refusing to be comforted because they are not; men who have led the forlorn hope and

looked unawed into the lion's angry eyes, are prostrate in the dust, bewailing their first-born; the Lord of the universe is branded as a bloodthirsty beast, whose company a self-respecting devil would decline to keep, but the bald head of Israel's peripatetic prophet is avenged!

I sincerely trust that I will not be burned as a heretic, or even expelled from the church if I declare my doubts anent the Rev. Mr. Elisha's bear story. It is just possible that such a personage existed; though there does not appear to have been any necessity for his creation. It is conceivable that the gamins of Jericho regarded him as a harmless half-wit hobo, used him for their sport until they got him "raw." It may be that while they were plaguing him a brace of ravenous bears set upon them. I can scarce blame the prowlers for preferring the tender children to the tough old prophet; still I regret that they didn't dally with him long enough to abate the insufferable nuisance. Elisha's bear story is one of those barbarisms which I shall cut out of the Bible when I re-write it, as I intend one of these days to do. It is not only a criminal libel of the Creator, but an insult to common sense.

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PUGILISM AND HYPOCRISY.

THE announcement that Corbett and Fitzsimmons will meet in the fistic arena at Dallas to determine which is the better man, has, as might have been expected, provoked a veritable deluge of sanctified "gush" and sentimental "rot." The press and pulpit of Texas were immediately seized with moral jimjams and began to cut fantastic capers before high heaven. One would suppose from their doleful jeremiads and frantic protests that

the bottom was about to be knocked out of the Christian cosmos, mortality sent careening over the ropes, civilization swiped from the face of the shrinking earth and chaos come again. Consistency is a jewel not found in the casket of the latter-day Jonahs. For years past slugging-matches have been of frequent occurrence in Texas, and have provoked scarce a protest from those goody-goodies who are now having a conniption fit every fifteen minutes over the Corbett-Fitzsimmons affair. It is a well-known fact that the less science fistic combatants possess the more liable they are to do each other serious bodily harm. A "mill" between unskilled sluggers resembles nothing so much as a kicking match between a brace of vicious mules, in which the beast that can stand the most punishment wins the battle, while a contest by well-trained athletes were like the fine sword-play of expert fencers. The pending bout is not likely to be nearly so "brutal" as many "mills" fought in Texas during the past half-dozen years, and duly reported by the very papers that want the visiting champions put in the penitentiary. The professional "moral element" is entirely too subsequent in getting its Ebenezer up, and I suggest that it be pulled down before a disgusted world expectorates upon it. Having swallowed a whole herd of mangy camels, the self-styled "moral element" should not employ a brass band to call attention to the fact that it is now straining so hard at a gnat that its umbilical cord is in danger of collapse. The abuse heaped upon the progressive city of Dallas because it made a bid for the great contest, is but the dishonest vaporings of a canting hypocrisy, accentuated by morbid minds and bilious livers. If Dallas were making deliberate preparation to violate a well-established law of the land it were well enough to criticize her; but the statute anent prize-

fighting, like many other enactments by Texas legislatures, is not considered by competent lawyers as one whit more reliable than a camp-meeting certificate of conversion. And it is reasonable to suppose that if the law in question would stand the crucible of the courts, those busy little souls who consider themselves pious because they dislike to see other people enjoy themselves, would have clamored for its enforcement long ere this.

The ICONOCLAST is not the apologist of pugilism. Its voice is ever for peace—peace in its most virulent form. I have had a sneaking respect for Grover Cleveland ever since he sent a substitute to fight the Southern Confederacy while he remained at home to play pinochle with the pretty girls. It proved that while he may not be much of a statesman in time of peace, there's no picnic ants on his judgment in time of war. But I do insist that if we are to have prize fights here in Texas they should be contests between expert boxers instead of awkward clowns who pound each other to a pulp to make a hoodlum holiday. Nor is a fistic encounter between first-class athletes altogether an unmixed evil. It inoculates our young men with a desire for physical development, and is a splendid object lesson in the very necessary art of self-defense. Every boy should learn to box; it is a manly accomplishment, necessary to the perfect physical development of the race. It is infinitely better that a boy should get a black eye or a bloody nose occasionally, and grow up masculine and self-reliant, than run to chrysanthemums and creased two-sahs, flash dickeys and effeminate dudism. Those who make super-goodness a paying profession sneer at the claim that pugilism is a "manly sport." However that may be it is certainly preferable to employing brazen apostates to defame Catholic nuns—or raping infants in Baptist universities. Nothing

is more conducive to continence than severe athletic training: hence it might not be a bad plan to make a hot whirl with the gloves a part of the daily devotional exercise of all professing he-Christians. While boxing does not insure morality, it is infinitely more profitable than empty dogmatizing. While the world may not fully approve of Corbett and Fitzsimmons facing each other in the "squared circle" like contending Titans, it will certainly esteem them above the cymbal-headed lollipops whose highest accomplishment is the nursing of canes. The proposed "mill," while not so elevating, perhaps, as a slum-gullion editorial in the Houston *Post*, or an official \$5-a-minute prayer, is calculated to inspire respect for nature's weapons and thereby assist in relegating the six-shooter to the rear. Personal encounters will be of occasional occurrence so long as man inhabits the earth; hence it might not be amiss for even "Christian Texas" to take an occasional lesson in the art of self-defense from men who do not gouge out eyes, chew off ears or bestride the brisket of a fallen foe and pound his face to a pumice. Whatever may be said against the "ring," it is one place where a man gets absolutely fair play, and that is more than can be said of the journalistic arena—or a mob of Baptist brethren assembled to hear one of their number back-cap his betters and descant upon the awful iniquity of the Church of Rome.

Striving to eliminate these contests of strength and skill were much like trying to tie up John Barleycorn with a Prohibition string. Man is naturally combative. As far back as we can trace his history he has rejoiced in trials of physical force. The Greeks of Homer's day fought with the terrible cestus; when Rome ruled the world every citizen was expected to be a soldier; the English could not get fighting enough in the tented field and resorted to tilt

and tourney. Despite our so-called civilization man is very much a savage. "The glory of the young man is his strength," just as it was when Solomon sat upon the throne of ancient Israel, and it is well. There is hope for a war-like and aggressive people. Such are the characteristics of an advancing civilization, while dudism is certain evidence of decay. That man who doesn't relish a rattling fight—e'en though it be only a dog fight—should be put in petticoats and his place in the world's economy supplied by the "coming woman." He is better qualified to lead a pug around with a pink ribbon and deodorize diapers than to sway the scepter of American sovereignty. Half those who damn prize fighting in public would swim a river to obtain a newspaper containing a write-up of an important "mill" by rounds. When Sullivan bested Kilrain I chanced to be stopping with a devout deacon who was particularly severe on pugilism. He said an editor who would print an account of a prize fight ought to be put in the penitentiary—meaning me; yet on the morning after the mill I found that good old man with his nose buried in a newspaper, and he wasn't reading the religious column, either. He was fairly wallowing in counters and uppercuts, stingers and stand-offs. He swooped down upon it like a hungry hen-hawk on an unripe gosling, read it through to the last line, then rolled his eyes to Heaven like a calf with the colic and wondered what this wicked old world was coming to. Had I declined to print it he would have written me a complimentary letter—and transferred his patronage to some other paper.

There must be some vent for the combative spirit which permeates the American people, and the glove contest is the most satisfactory and the least dangerous yet discovered. Statistics prove that a dozen men are killed

and as many crippled at football where one is seriously injured in the fistic arena. At inter-collegiate football games it is customary to have a surgeon present to care for the wounded; but I have yet to see one in attendance in his official capacity at a prize fight. In view of these facts the sanctified hullabaloo now heard because of the pending event in the world of pugilism is calculated to make sensible people long for the coming of the fool-killer.

* * *

ANTONIA TEIXEIRA.

THE ICONOCLAST is not in the habit of commenting on particular social ulcers and special sectarian scandals. It prefers to deal with broad principle rather than individual offenders. To even catalogue the sexual crimes of professing Christians and people of social preëminence—to turn the calcium for even a moment into all the grawsome closets of “respectability” and upon every sectarian cesspool redolent with “the odor of sanctity”—would consume the space of such a periodical, while proving about as profitable as pointing out each festering pustule on the person of a Hot Springs habitué trailing blindly in the wake of the Pandemian Venus; but once or twice in a decade a case arises so horrible in conception, so iniquitous in outline, so damnable in detail that it were impossible to altogether ignore it. Such a case has just come to light, involving Baylor University, that Bulwark of the Baptist church. I fain would pass it by, knowing as I do that criticism, however dispassionate and just, will be misconstrued by those good Baptist brethren who tried to muzzle me while ex-Priest Slattery foully defamed me, and whose religion teaches them that “with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged; and with what

measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." But on this point they have naught to fear. Had they, for every sneaking lie they have told about me, spawned a thousand; and had "Brother" Slattery, in the fullness of his Baptist Charity, branded me as a horse-thief and proved it, I could not, though vindictive as Thersites and gifted with the vocabulary of a Carlyle, do even and exact justice to the case of Antonia Teixeira. Crimes similar in some respects have been committed in White Chapel and on Boiler avenue; but, to borrow from Macaulay, "When we put everything together—sensuality, poltroonery, baseness, effrontery, mendacity, barbarity—the result is something which in a novel we should condemn as caricature, and to which, we venture to say, no parallel can be found in history." It is a case wherein "the qualities which are the proper objects of hatred, and the qualities which are the proper objects of contempt," preserve an exquisite and absolute harmony. Three times I have essayed to write of this enormous iniquity, this subter-brutish crime against the chastity of childhood, and thrice I have laid down my pencil in despair. As there is a depth of the sea to which the plummet will not descend, so are there depths of human depravity which mind cannot measure. Language hath its limits, and even a Dante could only liken the horrors of Hell to earthly symbols. It were as impossible to describe in print the case of Antonia Teixeira as to etch a discord or paint a stench. Before justice can be done to such a subject a new language must be invented—a language whose words are coals of juniper-wood, whose sentences are woven with a warp of aspics' fangs and a woof of fire.

We all remember the coming to Texas of Antonia Teixeira, the dove-eyed heteroscian, and the brass-band display made of the modest little thing by the Baptist breth-

ren, whose long years of missionary labor in Brazil had snatched her from the Papal power—a veritable brand from the burning. A tardy consent had been wrung from her widowed mother that Antonia should be brought to Texas. The child was to be given five years' schooling, then returned to her native land to point out to her benighted Catholic countrymen the water route to the Celestial City. Relying upon this promise, the simple Brazilian woman consigned her little wild-flower to the bosom of the Baptist church. Five years! What an eternity! How they would miss her at home—how they would count the days until she returned to them, a cultured lady, as wise even as the strange priests who spoke the English tongue! It must be for the best, she thought; so the poor woman crushed her heart in the name of Christ and took up her cross. And Antonia? How bright the world before her! To be educated, and useful and honored both in this world and the world to come, instead of an ignorant little beggar about the streets of Bahia. Bearded men prayed over her and sentimental women wept to know that she was saved—saved from the purgatorium of Popery! And then she was “consecrated” and began her studies at Baylor, the duly ordained “ward of the Baptist church.” Not yet 13 years old, and such honors paid her—what might she not expect in the years to be? How the poor little heart must have swelled with gratitude to the good Baptist brethren, and how she must have loved everything, animate and inanimate, that the good God had made. But ere long she found herself in Dr. Burleson’s kitchen instead of the class-room. Instead of digging Greek roots she was studying the esculent tuber. Instead of being prepared for missionary work, this “ward of the Baptist church” was learning the duties of the scullion—and Dr. Burleson has informed the world

through the public prints that as a servant she was not worth her board and clothes. But then she was not brought hither to sling pots, but to prepare for the saving of souls. Surely the blessed Baptist church will provide its little "ward" the board and clothes. Perhaps the poor child thought that scrubbing floors and playing under-servant was part of a liberal education, for she made no complaint to her self-constituted guardians. After some three years of the kitchen curriculum she was examined in the office of a secular official and it was there found that she had not made much progress toward effective missionary work. She had heard something of the Protestant faith and salvation by water, but did not understand it. And in two years more her "education" would be complete—the promise made to her mother redeemed! But suddenly it was discovered that the "ward of the Baptist church" was about to give birth to a babe. Day by day this mournful fact became more in evidence, and finally her dish-rag and scrub-broom studies were suspended because of a press of more important business. She was sneaked off to a private house and nothing said about her condition to the secular authorities—no steps taken to bring the destroyer of this child in short dresses to justice. But the meddlesome officials concluded to look after the "ward of the Baptist church" a little, and the poor child told them, reluctantly enough, how she had been dragged from her culinary class-room, drugged and three times criminally assaulted—how she complained, "but nothing was done about it." A medical examination demonstrated conclusively that she had been the victim of foul play. What did the aged president of Baylor, that sanctum sanctorum of the Baptist church, do about it? Did he assist in bringing to justice the man who had dared invade the sanctity of his household and

despoil the duly ordained "ward of the Baptist church?" Not exactly. He rushed into print with a statement to the effect that the child was a thief and "crazy after the boys"—that he had "prayed and wept over her" without avail. Are prayers and tears the only safeguards thrown around fourteen-year-old girls at Baylor? They do those things differently in Convent schools—supplement prayers and tears with a watchful care that makes illicit intercourse practically impossible. No matter how "crazy after the boys" a girl in short dresses may be, she is not permitted to go headlong to the Devil—to be torn to pieces and impregnated by some lousy and lecherous male mastodon. Dr. Burleson considered the idea that Antonia had been ravished as ridiculous, yet the doctors declare it one of the most damnable cases of outrage and laceration within their knowledge—and in matters of this kind a wicked and perverse generation is more likely to believe doctors of medicine than doctors of divinity. The students at Baylor declare that instead of being "crazy after the boys" Antonia was particularly modest and womanly. But had she been the brazen little thing which Dr. Burleson hastened to brand her, what were his duties in the premises: to guard her with especial care, or give the "boys" an opportunity to work their will, then turn her out with a Baptist bastard at the half-developed breast? *Enceinte* at 14, among strangers who had promised her mother that no harm should befall her. A mother while still in short dresses, and branded in the public prints as a bawd by people who worship One who forgave Mary Magdalen! We might have expected the very devils in hell to weep for the pity of it, but "Christian charity" had not yet reached its *ultima thule*. Another Baptist reverend had to have his say. He was somewhat interested in the matter, his brother having

been named by Antonia as her ravisher. This reverend gentleman tried to make it appear that the father of her unborn child was a negro servant and her accepted paramour. Had this been true, what an "ad." for Baylor University—that fourteen-year-old girls committed to its care conceived children by coons! But even Baylor did not deserve the terrible censure of Dr. Burleson's pious son-in-law, and Antonia replied to this insult added to injury by putting a white child in evidence—a child with the pale blue eyes and wooden face characteristic of those who defamed her. When the girl's condition became known the men about town—"publicans and sinners" such as Christ sat with, preferring their society to that of the pharisees—raised a handsome purse to provide for her and the young Baptist she was about to bring into the world, while those who should have guarded and protected her were resorting to every artifice human ingenuity could devise to blacken her name, to forestall pity, prevent charity and make an impartial trial of the case impossible. While men who never professed religion, who never expect to wear feathers and fly through Elysian fields, could not talk to each other about the case without crying, those wearing God's livery were eager to trample her down to the deepest hell to preserve the credit of their denomination. If there is anything on earth calculated to make a public prostitute of an unfortunate girl it is the treatment the Baptist brethren have accorded Antonia Teixeira.

At this writing (June 27) the preliminary trial awaits the convalescence of the child mother. I would not pre-judge the case. I know not who is the guilty man; but I do know that this child was brought from a faraway home by men who promised to protect her and transform her into a cultured and useful woman, and who so

far neglected their duty that she was debauched at Baylor University and her young life forever blighted. Better a thousand times that she should have remained in Brazil to say her pater nosters in the Portuguese tongue; better that she should have wedded a water-carrier in her native land and reared up sturdy sons and daughters of the Church of Rome, than to have been transported to Texas to breed illegitimate Baptists. I do know that at the very time "Brother" Slattery was writing us against the awful dangers of convent schools—and impeaching the chastity of the Catholic sisterhoods—and the Waco Baptists were crying "awmen"—this fourteen-year-old girl was growing great with child at Baylor University! I do know that while we were being assured that among all the nuns there was not one educated woman—not one competent to superintend the education of a child—a girl was completing her third year in the greatest educational institute the Baptists of Texas can boast, and in all that time she had learned but little, and that little she could have acquired almost as well in "Hell's Half-Acre." I do know that Antonia is not the first young girl to be sent from Baylor in disgrace—that she is not the first to complain of criminal assault within its sanctified walls. I do know that should a girl meet with a mishap at a convent school the Catholic priests would not turn against her and insult her family and her race by trying to fasten the fatherhood of her unborn babe upon a negro servant. I do know that instead of trying to drive the unfortunate girl to the "Reservation" with cowardly calumnies, they would draw around her the sacred circle of the Church of Rome, and if there remained within her heart one spark of noble womanhood it would be fanned by the white wings of love and charity into ethereal flame. I do know that if Antonia Teixeira was a Catholic instead of a half-

baked Baptist, every man within that church would be her brother, every woman her sister,—that every church bearing the cross would be her house of refuge. I do know that so far as Baylor University is concerned the day of its destiny is over and the star of its fate hath declined; that the brutal treatment the Brazilian child received at its hands will pass into history as the colossal crime of the age, and that generations yet to be will couple its name with curses deep as those which Roman matrons heaped on the head of Sextus Tarquinius—"he that wrought the deed of shame."

* * *

CASH VS. COIN.

COIN, a free silver advocate, and Cash, a hardshell goldbug, have been conducting supposititious schools for the instruction of the common people in the so-called "science of money." When first informed that their foolish little books were having an extensive sale, I supposed that the people regarded them simply as satires and read them to be amused; for not even a controversy between Mesdames Partington and Malaprop across the backyard fence anent the proper method of making soft-soap or skinning eels could be more excruciatingly funny. But I learned, somewhat to my surprise, that many people take them seriously—even study them with attention, hoping to gain valuable information therefrom. I would not now be surprised to hear that Munchausen and Mother Goose had been adopted as text-books by our universities. Coin should be soundly spanked for his presumption and placed in the A B C class of economics, and Cash sentenced to the dunce-block for at least a dozen years. There is some

hope for the first—he may outgrow his vagaries ; but the latter signs a dozen certificates to his own irremediable idiocy. He begins with a false premise and closes with a stolen currency plan. He brazenly makes misleading statements, then appears to take a fiendish delight in exposing his own falsehoods. Not being a metallist, I might be expected to regard the merry war now raging between the gold and silverites much as the old woman did the controversy between her husband and the bear; but of two evils there is always a least. If we must have a money that will either scale the mighty fortunes of the millionaires or ruthlessly despoil the pantries of the poor, in God's name give us the first. A depreciating currency is always an evil. It has ever been the *bête noire* of the ultra-conservative economists ; but I defy them to point to one nation it has irremediably ruined, to one people it has hopelessly impoverished. Yet the strand of Time is thick-strewn with wreck and ruin wrought by an appreciating currency,—a currency that concentrated the wealth of mighty nations in the hands of a favored few and made of the masses miserable bondmen—compelled them to choose between the bread of charity and the blood of revolution.

The free and unlimited coinage of silver would be a mistake *per se*, but wisdom personified compared with gold monometallism. It would not induct the toiling millions into an economic millennium ; but it would constitute a step in the emancipation of the industrial Israel. It were better to wander forty years in the monetary wilderness, and at last reach a fair Canaan, than to content ourselves with Egyptian bondage and the making of bricks without straw. Such being the case, it were well to look with a tolerant eye on the “ mistakes of Moses ”—who means well—and align our batteries full upon old Pharaoh. I have

no doubt that selfish monarch and his obsequious ministers talked to the groaning Israelites much as the money kings of to-day talk to the slaves of our industrial system. I can easily imagine them saying:

“What would ye; leave the flesh-pots of Egypt—whose savor ye are permitted to smell—and take to the desert? Would ye follow to your certain destruction this be-whiskered fanatic, this foolish Midianite whose calamity clacking hath made ye discontent? Behold the plagues already brought upon the land by him! See how much better off ye are than was labor four centuries ago. Why, we can prove it by the government statistics! Jacob and his sons lived in tents and came near starving to death, while ye inherit houses which ye have builded for yourselves, and for which ye pay rent—and there’s a free soup joint in every city. Talk about being oppressed! Why, the value of farm property has doubled, and there was never a time when ye could purchase so much with a talent of gold—if ye have the talent.”

The continual cry of the plutocrats through their newspapers and bipedal phonographs that the condition of labor is better to-day than in times past, is calculated to give sensible people a chronic case of ennui. It should be better—much better. The workman of to-day can create more wealth in a week than could his grandsire in a month, and the more he creates the more he should enjoy. The condition of the laborer, the farmer and the mechanic should have improved more than 300 per cent. during the past century. But has it? A century ago there was work for all and labor was sure of its reward. There was no such thing as able-bodied pauperism. How is it to-day? The Chicago *Tribune*, an ultra-conservative paper of the gold-bug school, estimated not long ago that a million American workmen were out of employ-

ment—subsisting on the crumbs that fell from Dives' banquet-board and accepting his cast-off clothing with obsequious thankfulness.

Cash opens his school with an object lesson intended to be very impressive. He informs us by means of diagrams that the wage of labor well-nigh doubled and its purchasing power almost trebled from 1860 to 1892. I had no idea the workman was getting along so well! If he keeps up that lick for a few years he will be living in brownstone fronts and clipping bond coupons—instead of going hungry to bed and wondering where in the Devil's name he is to get the money to meet the interest on his mortgage or make the monthly payment on the little jag of cheap furniture he purchased on the installment plan. With Cash's diagrams before us it is difficult to understand how it chanced that a million men were taking up their belly-bands a notch for breakfast, dining on free soup and sucking their breath for supper. The average of wages is higher to-day than in 1890, but lower than in 1870. From 1875 to 1892 the average advanced one-half of one per cent.—then dropped full 15 per cent. You can hire labor cheaper to-day than a quarter of a century ago, and there are more men waiting for jobs. Yet in a quarter of a century the wealth-creating power—the value—of labor has almost doubled. Does not that clearly demonstrate that there's something radically wrong? Despite the fact that the wealth-creating power of labor has more than trebled during the century, the fact remains—a fact as gross to sense as the sun at noon to-day—that never before in the history of this nation, barring the acute stages of two or three panics, was it so difficult for the laborer, the mechanic and the farmer to make an honest living, or for the debtor to discharge his obligations. The gulf that separates Dives and Lazarus is

wider than ever before—and this despite the fact that the average of wages is higher and their purchasing power greater than forty years ago. As civilization advances the standard of living rises. Our ancestors lived on roots and raw meat, inhabited caves and hollow trees and attired themselves in a streak of red paint for winter over-coat and a few freckles for summer ulster; but as the world made progress from pure animalism the luxuries of one generation became the necessities of the next—a fact which Cash has not dreamed of in his philosophy. He assures us that the principal cause of the panic of 1893 was “the decreased cost of production.” In other words, when the people discovered that they could produce two bushels of wheat and two bolts of cloth with the expenditure of the same energy that was required in former times to produce one bushel of wheat and one bolt of cloth, they became panic-stricken—were so badly scared that they proceeded to go naked and hungry! He first points to the increased purchasing power of wages as a boon enjoyed by the workingman, then assures him that the decrease in the cost of commodities was what turned him into a tramp! It seems almost like cruelty to animals to criticize such a consummate idiot. It is only a lurking suspicion that Cash is more knave than fool—that he has been duly employed to pull wool over the eyes of the ignorant—that leads the ICONOCLAST to dignify his ridiculous book with this review. I have some respect for an honest ignoramus, but when a man possessing the faintest adumbration of intellect employs it in assisting Greed to despoil Need, he deserves to have his shirt-tail set on fire.

Cash “admits that we are in the midst of a great financial and industrial depression”—precipitated by an increased ability to create wealth—but would not have us

become discouraged. He assures us that "this panic will not always last." Let us hope not; but if we may judge the future by the past—and cuckoo economics still prevail—it will scarce have blown itself out before another is ripe. In twenty years we have had three panics, and the depression which follows these crashes usually lasts from three to seven years. In other words, the workman can depend upon being employed at fair wages and the planter confidently expect to purchase with his cotton enough Paris green to poison the worms, about one year in four. And it is the occasional oasis in the industrial desert which Cash employs to prove that labor is fairly reveling in Lucullean luxury—that those who are striving to emancipate it from poverty are a pack of pestiferous demagogues. To illustrate how rapidly the man with the hoe is becoming a gold-plated plutocrat, he points out that the increase of the value of farm property in Minnesota during the past ten years amounts to more than \$176,000,000, while the mortgage debt increased but \$4,000,000 during the same time. He neglects, however, to mention that Minnesota is a new State, that the immigration has been very large and the increase in farm values chiefly is due to augmented population. According to his figures the increase in land values represents about five-sixths of the total, but as he fails to state how much of this represents improvements and how much "unearned increment" his statistics are utterly worthless. The increase in land values may be entirely due to increase in population for aught he shows to the contrary, which would leave about \$30,000,000 to represent the reward of labor in one of the greatest agricultural States for a period of ten years. Had Cash been seeking the truth instead of something to bolster up a preconceived theory, he would have taken for illustration one of the older agricultural States. He

might as well have selected Oklahoma and argued from the rapid increase of farm values that the American agriculturists are becoming veritable Astors! Having given the increase in farm debt, he should have given the amount of mortgage foreclosure. There is nothing in his statistics to show that half the arable area of Minnesota has not passed into the ownership of Eastern capitalists during the decade. Figures do not lie, to be sure, but—to quote from Cash—"They are the best friends a financial liar ever had."

He tells us, and quite truly, that "the credits of the country are based on the property of the country"—that the "debts of the country are paid with the products of the soil and the handicrafts of the people." To the query, How can we repay the wealth we have borrowed from John Bull, he replies: "We will send the Englishman something to eat and to wear." That being the case, what has our currency to do with our foreign trade? Yet he tells us to reject currency plans "when they propose a money good enough to use at home, but which the foreigner will not take." Did we ever make a money that the foreigner would not "take"? Has the foreigner made money since the establishment of a purely American currency system that we would "take"? If Cash had a hatful of British guineas he couldn't buy a beer with them in the entire city of Chicago. He could doubtless find someone to purchase them by weight, just as he could go on the market and dispose of a carload of pork or pig-iron.

Cash undertakes to demonstrate to a doubting world that gold, instead of increasing, is actually decreasing in value. He assures us that a day's labor is the measure of value,—in fact the only one—declares that "it will buy more than one and a half times as much gold as it would forty years ago," and closes with the triumphant cackle of

an old hen that, by laborious effort, has succeeded in laying a new egg. Accepting a day's labor as the best possible measure of value, what does Cash prove by it? Simply that gold, instead of having diminished in value, has greatly increased. His assumption that a day's labor will buy a third more gold than it would forty years ago might be easily disproved; but granting that his premise is correct, his conclusion is wrong. Labor is valuable only as it is productive, and Cash assures us that a given amount of human effort will produce three times as much wheat and more than three times as much cotton cloth as it would forty years ago. We know that the same rule applies to almost every line of human endeavor—because Cash has told us so. What does this signify? Simply that in forty years labor has about trebled in value; yet a given amount, instead of buying three times as much gold, will purchase but a trifle more than one-half times as much. Does Cash catch the idea? If his conclusion that gold has decreased in value more than 50 per cent. in forty years be correct, I submit that as a measure of value it is a miserable failure and we had best find a better one.

A suspicion that gold and paper currency bottomed thereon do not constitute the best possible exchange medium seems to have occurred to Cash, for he suggests one composed of greenbacks "convertible into a 2 per cent. government bond—an interconvertible bond which may be exchanged for the greenbacks again upon the demand of the holder," then adds: "The proposed credit money would constitute a flexible currency which would always answer the demands of business. It would increase and decrease according to demand, and no currency famine could occur so long as there were outstanding bonds."

Cash has appropriated, without so much as by-your-leave, the currency plan which I proposed in the ICONOCLAST for December, 1891, and elaborated in a widely circulated pamphlet entitled "Dives and Lazarus," published June 1, 1894. It was this plan which the financiers of Germany discussed and approved at Berlin in 1893. I would feel highly gratified by an indorsement of my interconvertible bond-currency plan by the spokesman put forward by the American gold monometallists had he not taken the precaution to spoil it by stipulating that we "keep as the standard of value the gold dollar of present weight and fineness"—which he assures us has fluctuated more than 50 per cent. in forty years! Still I am grateful for the direct admission by the gold-bugs that it is not necessary to bottom our paper money on metal, and for the tacit admission that a currency so constituted cannot possibly be a flexible currency, answering to the demands of business and preventing money famines. But just how we are to retain the fluctuating gold dollar as the standard of value when we have a currency in nowise dependent upon the yellow metal is beyond my philosophy. I fear that Cash has brooded over the money problem until his little think-tank has got full of logical wiggletails. If the bond-currency plan works it will soon be adopted by all enlightened nations and the monetary occupation of gold will be gone. The decreased demand will cause a slump in price greater than Cash figures out has occurred in the last forty years.

To emancipate our measure of value from the laws which govern commodities and make it as immutable as the multiplication table, I suggested the plan which Cash seems unable to comprehend. For his benefit I will re-state it as briefly as possible:

"Let the government sell just as many one per cent.

interconvertible bonds as the people desire, the proceeds constituting a redemption fund. Any one having United States currency of any kind could exchange it for these bonds redeemable on demand. Add full legal tender treasury notes to the volume of currency just so long as the increase will remain in the channels of trade. When people are buying bonds the currency is redundant; when they are selling bonds the volume of currency is too small to properly serve the ends of commerce. In the bond redemption fund we have an infallible indicator of the currency requirements of the country. When the volume of currency is too small its purchasing power increases until equal to the work required of it; when redundant its purchasing power decreases until all is employed. By this system the volume of currency would adapt itself automatically and infallibly to the requirements of commerce and our measure of value remain immutable."

Cash lays it down as a fundamental principle that "intrinsically valuable money only is a measure of value," yet commends a currency plan that would either prove a flat failure or drive all intrinsically valuable money out of existence. He prides himself on "disagreeing with all the economists of the world" regarding the quantitative theory of money, yet approves a currency plan based exclusively upon that theory. The bond-currency plan would make our measure of value a theoretical dollar—purely a trade tool. Its value would not depend upon cost of production but on utility—on supply relative to demand.

Cash has something to say about "the science of money." They all do. It is supposed to be something very esoteric, quite beyond the comprehension of the *hoi polloi*. The metallists prattle of "redemption money," and "money of final payment," and "gold as a standard

of value," until, like a half-baked sophist, they become completely lost in a fog of their own making and proceed to inflict a suffering public with books filled from *imprimis* to *finis* with foolish contradictions and self-evident absurdities. I have neither space nor inclination for a dissertation on money, but will drop the befuddled Cash a line to enable him to find his way out of the labyrinth in which he is lost. Should he inadvertently hang himself with it afterward "the science of money" will not have lost much. A dollar, whether it be of gold, silver or paper, is simply a check which the people in their official capacity gave against the entire wealth and credit of the nation. Unless it be redeemed on demand in the necessities or luxuries of life it is absolutely worthless. There can be no "money of final payment." When you exchange a paper dollar for a gold dollar you have simply traded one government check for another—the gold dollar awaits redemption in commodities. One dollar is simply a figure of speech by which we express the commercial relation which one commodity bears to others. Every exchange made is upon this basis, but by using metal as an exchange medium all deferred payments become speculations—deals in futures. One great fault of Cash is jumping at conclusions, spraining his logical sequence in mid-air and landing on both sides of the goal. He has heard that the "per capita circulation of money is approximately two and one-half times as much in France as it is in England, while the prices of the great staples do not vary very much in the two countries." That is what causes him to joyfully bestride the celluloid collars of "all the great economists of the world" on the quantitative theory of money. It is another sad illustration of the axiom that "a little learning is a dangerous thing." Cash has heard of improved machinery in agriculture and

the industrial arts, but is evidently not aware that in some portions of the world it is applied to exchange. A given quantity of currency will do double the money work in England than it will in France, perhaps ten times what it will in China. Exchanges to the amount of hundreds of millions sterling are effected without the handling of a single coin or the passing of a pound note. If we would abolish our banks and clearing houses here in the United States we would require a currency of at least \$250 per capita to expeditiously transact our present volume of business. In every civilized country money is becoming ever less an exchange medium, while retaining its attribute as a measure of value. If we could so perfect our exchange system as to transact all our business without the use of money there would be no need of the interconvertible bond-currency plan, for the very thing at which it aims—to take currency altogether out of the control of politicians and place it in the hands of commerce—would be accomplished.

But this is probably as large a lesson as Cash can digest in a single year. When he has thoroughly mastered it I will explain to him, in words adapted to his understanding, that while the free and unlimited coinage of silver is an awkward and uncertain step, it is still a step forward; but that gold monometallism is an unequivocal step backward. The first is a misdirected blow for liberty; the last a strengthening of the chains that bind America's industrial slaves.

FACT AND FANCY.

DISHED UP IN BROKEN DOSES.

I AM sometimes tempted to believe that lying is a disease and that some doctor will yet discover a gold-cure for it,—will demonstrate that the bad habit is due to microbes that get into a man's mind and make trouble trying to turn round, or to bacilli that bore holes in his moral character and let his honesty leak out; for the medical fraternity has gravely informed us that Kleptomania (sneak-thievery by eminently respectable people) and dipsomania (sottishness by the social salt of earth) are simply diseases that should be treated with pills and powders instead of with penitentiaries and whipping posts. If a man will steal a sawmill and go back after the site simply because his pericardium is out of plumb or his liver has gone into politics; will nurse a juicy old jag until it develops into a combined museum and menagerie because his circulation has slipped an eccentric or his stomach got out of its regular orbit, I submit in all seriousness that he might be physically incapacitated for telling the truth by insidious attack on his moral character by the dreadful falsehood fungi, and that the best way to restore him to mental health would be to fumigate him. The Lord once attempted to check the lying habit by striking falsifiers dead, but soon saw that such a plan would prove more destructive than another deluge—that there wouldn't be even a Noah's ark picnic party of us left—and reluctantly relinquished it. Science has not yet succeeded in mastering the disease, but give it time and it will save the world yet; will find a medical name for every human frailty,—be able to tell, by looking at a man's tongue, whether he is coming down with the mugwump

malaria or the office-holding hysteria and do something for him before it's everlasting too late.

Friendship is fast becoming an arrant fraud, a brutal bunco game. We fawn that thrift may follow; are prodigal of sweet words because they cost nothing, and swell the sails of many a rich argosy, but weigh every penny we put forth and carefully calculate the chance of gain or loss. It's heads I win, tails you lose, and when we cannot play on that principle we promptly jump the game. "Who steals my purse steals trash." That's Shakespeare. "He that filches from me my good name . . . makes me poor indeed." That's nonsense. Reputation is but the ephemeral dew on character's everlasting gold; but he that steals the human heart and tramples it beneath his brutal heel; he that feigns a friendship he does not feel; he that fawns upon his fellows and hugs them hard and after scandals them, is the foulest fraud in all this land of fakes, the most hideous humbug in all hell's unclean hierarchy. I am sometimes tempted to believe that the only friendship that will stand fire is that of a yellow dog for a pauper negro. Strike a friend for a small loan and his affection grows suddenly cool; lose your fortune and your sweetheart sends you word that she will be a sister to you; your brother will betray you for boodle, your father fight you for a foolish flag, and your heirs-at-law dance when they hear of your death; but the devotion of a yaller dog to a worthless nigger hath all seasons for its own.

There never was an atheistical book written, there never was an infidel argument penned that touched the core of any religion, Christian or pagan. Bibles, Korans, Zendavestas—all sacred books—are but the feeble effort

of finite man to interpret the Infinite, to speak forth the unspeakable, to reduce to intelligible human characters the flame-written hieroglyphs of the sky. "Who made God?" Suppose, good sir, that I find thee an answer: Who will furnish thee with an intellect to understand it? How will you comprehend the genesis of a God, when the wisest man for whom Christ died cannot tell why water runs down hill instead of up—cannot explain the basic principle of the law of gravitation; when the greatest philosopher of the globe cannot even guess why a woman says "No, sir," when she means "Yes, my dear," nor what induces a devout deacon to damn prize-fighting all day then sit up all night and watch the bulletin boards to learn which licked. An atheist once solemnly assured me that he couldn't possibly believe anything he couldn't prove; but when I asked him what led him to take such a lively interest in the welfare of his wife's children, became almost as angry as a Calvinist whose Confession of Faith had been called in question. Figure up how much you can prove that you believe, and you'll find that you've got to do a credit business or go into intellectual bankruptcy.

Matches, we are told, are made in heaven. I think it likely, for Satan himself is said to have originated there. My observation has been that most matches are made about in this manner: By some horrible accident John Hennery and Sarah Jane become acquainted. They have no more "affinity" than a practical politician and pure spring water; but they dance and flirt, fool around the front gate in the dark of the moon, sigh and talk nonsense. John Hennery begins to take things for his breath and Sarah Jane for her complexion. The young goslings get wonted to each other, and the first thing you know they're tied up till death or divorce doth them part.

And had Sarah Jane missed John Henney altogether she would have been just as well—perhaps better—content with some other fellow, while he would have found a different mother-in-law and made as enthusiastic a failure of married life. Most people marry without really knowing whether they are in love or not and find out later that it was a false alarm—that they had mistaken the gregarious habit for the ukase of Hymen. But when a couple's really got what ailed Romeo and Juliet they are in no more doubt about it than was the man who sat down on the circular saw to see if it was running and found it the sole proprietor of a South American revolution. They don't have to send their feeling to a chemist for analysis and classification, nor take an invoice of their affections to see if any have got away. Love is really a very serious thing. Like seasickness, everybody laughs at it but the fellow that's got it. When Cupid lets slip a sure-enough shaft it goes through a fellow's heart like a Kansas cyclone through a colored camp-meeting, and all the powers of Hell can never head it off. The mighty hand of death itself cannot prevail against it, for Love is immutable and immortal.

There are a few frauds who merit our respect if not our reverence—men who are infinitely better than they would have the world believe. As the purest pearl is incased in an unseemly shell, so, too, many a God-like soul is enshrined in a breast of seeming adamant. If a man may smile and smile and be a villain still, so may he frown and frown and be as far removed from villainy as the midday sun from cimmerian night. Many a man swears because he's too proud to weep, hides a quivering soul behind the cynic's sneer, fronts the world like a savage beast at bay while his heart's a fathomless lake of tears. Tennyson tells us of a monstrous figure of complete steel and

armed cap-a-pie, that guarded a castle gate, and by its awful name and war-like mien affrighted the fearful souls of men. But one day a dauntless knight unhorsed it and clove through the massy helm, when forth from the wreck there came, not a demon armed with the scythe of Death, but a smooth-faced boy, scarce old enough to break a pointless lance upon the village green. So, too, when with the brand Excalibur of human sympathy, you shear down through the helm and hardness of some rough-spoken man who seems to hate all human kind, you find the soul of a woman and the heart of a little child. In this too callous age, with its false friendships and its ephemeral loves, its god of gold, its selfishness and its sin, the super-sensitive soul is oftentimes driven in upon itself—is forced by the empoisoned stings of vicious human insects to seek a sanctuary behind a savage front. Happy those who understand not this manner of man—imagine at most that he's but troubled with a bad digestion or a touch of the yellow jaundice. Happy the man who can take the good the gods provide and forget the ill; who can fill the place of a friend proved false and go on his way rejoicing; who can bury his first-born and find Time a panacea for his pain; who can weep his heart out on the grave of one wife —then get him another! Happy the man with a wooden head and an india-rubber soul! Do but give the beast provender and it will find Life worth the living, or brine to the bloodless oyster and it were well content.

The A.P.A. (Aggregation of Pusillanimous Asses) has not yet demanded "Old Rosy's" resignation as register of the treasury, nor suggested that the bones of Chief Justice Taney be torn from the grave and hanged in chains.

French social customs, as well a French fiction, are becoming popular in this country, and even find enthusiastic imitators here in Texas. It is becoming quite "the thing" for sportive matrons of high degree to have their lovers, *à la Française*, and go gadding about with them at all hours of the day and night, while hubby remains at home to reflect with Othello that to be robbed and know it not is to be nothing out.

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THE SAVIOURS OF TEXAS.

PERHAPS the most remarkable gathering in the history of Texas honored Dallas with its august presence the other day. It sailed under the high-sounding title of "The Texas Immigration and Industrial Association"—its name being considerably longer than its list of delegates. About three dozen would-be saviours of Texas were in attendance, and among them several really representative men; but the latter seemed to have taken but little part in the "convention" proceedings. They appear to have dropped in incidentally, much as they would attend a circus or go to see Hoyt's "Hole in the Ground," and when requested to assist in the performance of the ridiculous farce quietly made a sneak. The only representative Wacoite present hastened away to "catch a train"—notwithstanding the fact that the fate of Texas was trembling in the balance—while others slipped out on the plea of "important business," leaving "Plain" J. W. Riggins, "Colonel" Rienzi Miltiades Johnson and a few kindred characters to take official charge of the future greatness and glory of the Lone Star State. The scene

which ensued rivaled in impressiveness the signing of the Declaration of Independence or the Fathers of the Imperial City considering the advance of Lars Porsena. In this acute crisis "Colonel" Johnson forgot his Napoleonic pose, and the classic legs of Riggins, our industrial Moses, wobbled beneath the weight of responsibility. Even J. K. Street, "journalist," seemed to realize that the critical moment in the history of Texas had arrived—that a mistake on the part of "The State Immigration and Industrial Association" (limited) might plunge the world in gloom. A profound hush, such as sometimes falls upon a female suffrage convention, pervaded the hall—even the clothes of the Fort Worth delegates became subdued. Everybody was waiting for Riggins to "get the idea." They felt that if he once got it—and survived the shock—Texas was safe. It came, but slowly, fearfully, like a stranger invading a strange land, doubting if he would be welcome. It appears to have been to the effect that if one flock of gabbling geese saved Rome another might do as much for Texas. Kind Heaven will not permit these crises to last long—they are too harrowing. When there is a great emergency Providence provides a man. We know now why Riggins was born. Nature, wiser than we, not only brought him into the world, but saved him up carefully for that supreme moment—to make him the patent of the new and greater Texas, when mighty cities will be built with wind instead of work. The agony over, the members of the "convention," or rather such of them as had remained—shook hands with each other in delirious ecstasy and pledged the lives, the fortunes and the sacred honor of their rich relatives to the upbuilding of Texas—then created offices enough to go round. Of course Riggins was made president of the new-born association—which appears to have sprung full-grown from his teeming brain.

like Minerva from the bulging brow of Olympian Jove. Filial affection required that the association with the to-be-continued-in-our-next name and limited membership should honor its father, so Riggins was escorted to the dais-throne and invested with the purple robe. Whereases and resolutions now flew thick and fast, with an occasional peroration sandwiched in as tabasco sauce. The geese were doing their best. To encourage them Riggins turned loose a new lot of six-for-a-quarter "ideas," and it was expected that before the "convention" adjourned the sun of prosperity would shine so brightly it would be necessary to put green goggles on the tobacco signs. But salvation is no longer free, and industrial millenniums cost money. It might have been expected that the pure patriots who composed the "convention" would gladly pay the freight; but this did not occur to them. They proceeded to "assess" the people so much per capita "for preliminary expenses," and the plebs were instructed to put up. Of course they will do so. It were like flying in the face of Providence to disregard the ukase issued by the forty wise men who constitute "The State Immigration," etc. association.

The people are fully convinced that Riggins and Rienzi know what is best for them; that they cannot only make Texas healthy, wealthy and wise by the magic power of wind, but cause the hen to lay two boiled eggs per diem; hence we can but wonder that the secretary of the association was not instructed to draw for the "preliminary expense" money without more ado. Some sacrilegious scoffer may have the temerity to inquire: "Who the Devil are Riggins and Rienzi that they presume to act in the name of the people and lay taxes like a Russian czar?" But if any such there be we'll put him to the torture—we'll chain him to the horse-block and compel him to read

one of Riggins' literary efforts, or to contemplate Rienzi Miltiades for ten minutes while the latter is acting as aide-de-camp on the gilded staff of Governor Culberson. Riggins and Rienzi making glad the waste places of Texas were a scene on which the future historian will love to dwell, and many an artist yet to be will select it for his masterpiece. But in all seriousness, Texas is in no need of industrial doctors. It is the most prosperous spot on God's great earth to-day. The State is developing rapidly and naturally through individual effort. If Riggins and Rienzi really have the good of Texas at heart let the former return to his plunder-shop, the latter to his master and buckle down to business, each in his own little way, instead of gadding about the State giving foolish advice anent matters of which they know infinitely less than nothing. If their inordinate itch for notoriety will not permit of their permanent retirement from the public stage, let them play the Two Dromios or travel as a song-and-dance team in the side-show of some well-regulated circus.

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A LITERARY LEPER.

Four years ago the respectable people of Houston became so thoroughly disgusted with the "personal" column of their morning paper that they besought the ICONOCLAST, then published at Austin, to rake it fore and aft. It was much like asking this paper to abolish pole-cats or purify the Chicago river, for the "personal column" of the *Post* was, by all odds, the foulest, filthiest and most damnably disgusting thing to be found in American journalism. Compared with this avatar of uncleanliness, this incarnation of brutal lust and unbridled villainy, the worst features of the *Sunday Sun* and *Police Gazette* were white-

stoled purity. In it old libertines advertised for school-girl victims and pickled prostitutes made brazen bids for business. This column became the *piece de resistance* of the *Post*, and presumably its chief source of revenue. Its counting-room was transformed into an assignation post-office, a broker's shop for bawds, and letters were received there for delivery which it was unsafe to transmit through Uncle Sam's mail. The ICONOCLAST put a clothes-pin on its nose, provided itself with a bottle of carbolic acid and a night-soil cart and undertook the duty imposed upon it in the interests of moral sanitation. And it did it well, for the "personal column" quickly became as pure as a lily, sweet and wholesome as the balmy breath of a calf fed on red clover. Not daring to longer continue the profitable business of virtue broker, the *Post* cast about for new means of revenue, and soon found that as a money-getter the fake voting contest was preferable even to the "personal column." From pandering to surething gambling was a vast improvement from a moral standpoint, and for nearly four years the *Post* was reasonably decent, though never respectable. Of late, however, complaints have been coming to the ICONOCLAST that its contemporary has fallen from grace and needs re-vaccinating—or rather a new hypodermic injection of bi-chloride of gold for the obscene habit. After many days the dog has returned to his vomit. The *Post* now runs—under very flimsy disguises—big advertisements for bawdy houses. When "madame" desires to call public attention to her place of business, she has the editor of the *Post* "interview" her on some pretext, and her name, number and the physical condition of her "girls" are duly set forth for the guidance of the sporting element of Houston and the stranger within her gates. Some time ago a very pretty specimen of *Post* "enterprise" in this

new field of journalistic endeavor reached this office with an urgent request for comment, but we thought perhaps it was an accident—that it had inadvertently crept in while Editor Hill was out behind the barn enjoying a fit of the sulks and his private secretary was absent saving the country—so we held our peace. It appears, however, that the good people of Houston have not taken our forbearance in a friendly spirit, for to-day—June 24—the mails bring us no less than eleven of these unclean ads., clipped from one issue of the *Post*, together with various letters demanding to know, “What is the ICONOCLAST here for?” Well, it is not here to cleanse every moral cesspool and play guardian angel to every journalistic abortion. When a literary prostitute is once placed in the path of virtue, but cannot be kept there except through constant fear of the scourge, we had best let her go her way until she stifles with the noxious fumes of her own foulness. Those good people of Houston who do not care to have their daughters informed regarding the worst phases of the social evil, and their sons daily assured that at such and such places are well regulated bagnios perfectly free from that complaint which the French and Italians, with admirable courtesy, name after each other, can secure respectable papers at the same price, and permit the *Post* to gratify to the full its long-cherished ambition to become the recognized organ of Happy Hollow.

SALMAGUNDI.

America sends missionaries to the philosophic Hindus—and licenses houses of prostitution.

The Lord never yet "called" a preacher to serve for a smaller salary.

You cannot reform society from the bottom—you must begin at the top.

The dreadful scandal at Baylor University suggests that we do not hold our Baptists under water long enough.

You must get a square meal inside and a clean shirt outside of a man, before he's a fit subject for saving grace.

The amateur editor of the Houston *Post* appears to be imbued with the idea that the more white he spoils the greater journal he is making.

A Christian world does not remember that the Jews gave birth to Christ, but never forgets that they crucified him.

Texas' gold-bug "Democrats" should practice sprinting before yoking themselves to the lusty free-silver calf.

The "State Immigration and Industrial Association" should apply a hot mush-poultice to its "president."

Waco's Warwick insists on once more bestriding the political buzz-saw.

